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By GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD

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WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?

AN INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE AND KINDS OF VIRTUE AND INTO THE SANCTIONS, AIMS, AND VALUES OF THE MORAL LIFE

BY

GEORGE TRUMBULL LADD, LL.D.

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PREFACE

THE question, What can I know? differs most conspicuously from the one which it is now proposed to consider, in respect of the point of view from which the latter must be surveyed and the nature of its answer determined. This difference is plainly expressed, or at least irresistibly suggested, by the very terms in which the two questions must be couched before they can be laid side by side for purposes of comparison. It is not, however, the difference between Knowing and Doing, great as this at first blush appears to be. Knowing is itself a species of doing; and there is little or no high-class conscious doing which does not incorporate into the very body of the activity — be it one of a rather low-class muscular sort, so far as external appearances go — a large element of accompanying cognitive activity. Knowing how to do is not often a completely finished achievement before the deed itself begins to be done; it is oftener an essential part of the deed itself.

The difference to which we have just referred as most conspicuous is, however, expressed in the two words "can" and "ought." The latter word introduces a distinction which, as some prefer to

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hold, sets apart a certain kind of doing from all other kinds; but, as we incline to believe and hope to make clear, the feeling of obligation ("I ought") properly applies to that aspect of all human activity which fitly claims to receive and which in fact does receive, the title *conduct*, in the more precise meaning of this term. But, of course, what I ought to do depends in large measure, if not absolutely, on what I can know; and on the other hand, what I can know, by no means infrequently depends upon whether I do, or not, what I ought to do. Knowledge and duty can no more be divorced than can knowledge and deed. And the more we extend the idea of duty over the domain of deed, the more do the problems of knowledge and the problems of morals become interrelated and interdependent. Thus we may be led on to speak of what ought to be, and what ought not to be, with respect to the mental imagery, the secret thoughts, the suppression or the indulgence of the passions, of the emotions and the sentiments, even before they have eventuated in any form of doing which others can observe.

It is quite impossible, then, to discuss the two questions, What can I know? and, What ought I to do? as though they were, either in nature or in practice, and whether considered chiefly for theoretical satisfaction or for the guidance of life, without almost constant reference back and forth. And yet the distinction involved in the two words

"can" and "ought" remains all through the discussion in unabated force. It persists, indeed, in such a way as to instigate many sharp and even rancorous debates between ability to know and obligation to do. It is in the light of the full-orbed and well-illumined conception of personality that all these debates must be regarded; it is in the same light that the many difficult problems involved must find their solution, if solution, complete or partial, is to be found at all. For knowledge and faith, duty and hope, are all interrelated processes of the one rational nature of man. And so, perchance, by discourse about duty we may lead the mind from the assurance of knowledge to some of the comforts of believing and the privileges of hope.

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"He who does not unconditionally believe in the Might of Goodness in the world, and in its final victory, he can no longer lead in human affairs — I do not say rightly, but even with any lasting success." — ROTHE.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

WHAT OUGHT I TO DO?

CHAPTER I

MEANING OF THE QUESTION

IN considering any question, the solution of which has an important bearing upon our practical interests, it is desirable to know beforehand something definite as to what that particular question means to ask. Such knowledge is especially desirable in the case of the question we are about to raise. *What ought I to do?* is an inquiry which demands an ever recurring and perpetually shifting answer; and at the same time, it is most puzzling and most complicated. Consider the dramatic, the often highly tragic situations in which individuals, communities, and nations, so frequently find themselves as they ask this question! Consider their various mental attitudes when determining the result; the choice of a means for reaching the end which is sought; or of doubt about a plan; or of ignorance as to some special factor involved in both plan and means, — with the emotional accompaniments of anger, ambition, hatred, love, hope, or despair! At times, this inquiry is passionately thrust forth by the individual inquirer into the

darkness of night, and no reply from the surrounding darkness ever returns. At other times, it is whispered to an ally in some base conspiracy, or is frankly proposed to a trusted counsellor and friend. Yet again, it may be referred on bended knees, from the full but silent heart, to Heaven and to the righteous and compassionate One whom faith enthrones there.

But now if we change our point of view from the one who raises the question in a very concrete and particular way, to any other who attempts to answer the same question, its difficulty and complicated and uncertain character become even more apparent. In its strictly personal form, the answer involves consideration of the strangely mixed conditions that determine the character for success or failure, the excellence of repute or abundance of shame, of every individual life. Heredity, environment, and what for a better name we are used to call good or bad luck, are in most cases the determining factors of what the individual actually does; and — too often falsely — under the avowed if not sincere impression that thus he ought to do. Still, even when we try to view any deed as mere fact, enforced or obscurely produced by all these external factors, there is something in all cases, and in many cases there is much, which is left over as it were, and which seems to arise from the most profound and mysterious depths of the person himself. How, then, shall one person ever ven-

ture to tell another with any degree of confidence precisely what, under his peculiar circumstances and with his matchless — however seemingly ordinary — mental and moral make-up, that other *ought* to do.

This pertinacity of individuality, this indisposition to be told by others with a voice of authority, not to say with the voice of command and threatening, what one ought to do in matters involving personal obligation, is not so fundamentally unreasonable as it might, on first consideration, easily appear. For, as we shall see more clearly in the sequel, conduct is a very definitely personal affair; and this is equally emphatically true, whether we consider its source, its essential character, or its more distinctively moral consequences.

On the other hand, the question, *What ought I to do?* is a question which no individual can ask himself, much less, sanely and satisfactorily answer, without a large admission into the account of considerations of a profound and wide-spreading social order. When Buddhism, in order to comfort the suffering millions of India who were longing somehow to "get off the wheel" of life, with whose everlasting turning and accompanying misery the tenets of orthodox Hindūism was tormenting them, denied the doctrine of the substantial immortality of the human soul, it was obliged to find a substitute in the scarcely less terrible doctrine of *Karma*. The necessity

was not due to the fear that, if the terrors of a material hell were removed from the imagination of the common people, they would run riot in crime and immorality. The necessity was due, the rather, to the respect of the philosophic mind for the law of "ethical causation." This is what the doctrine of Karma really is, — an extension of the *law of ethical causation* into the unseen and infinite Beyond. It is the doctrine, as says the *Visuddhi-Magga:* "Between Karma and re-birth consciousness is one connection of cause and effect; between sensation and desire is a connection of effect and cause; and between existence and birth a connection of cause and effect." Or, as the couplet of Schiller expresses the same truth:

> "This is the very curse of evil deed,
> That of new evil it becomes the seed."

Into this chain of "ethical causality" the individual person is thrown, and in such a way that he cannot wholly avoid the responsibility for the consequences of his doing, as those consequences fall upon others in an endless series of sequences, whether the substantiality of his own soul be held to keep him somewhere alive to note them, or not.

No individual, then, can consider the question, *What ought I to do?* as having meaning for himself alone. It has its meaning — and not infrequently, its most distinctive and even appalling

meaning — out of respect to the relation which the individual's doing has to the doing and the welfare of innumerable others in the persistent and bewildering complex of the social organization of which — will he or nill he — he is an integrant member.

Now, of course, society has itself made large and on the whole appropriate provision for dealing with this law of "ethical causality." Its provision consists of a more or less loose, or in many cases, of an extremely rigid, arrangement of rewards and of preventive, or corrective and retributive measures. These measures have taken the form, either of matured and consolidated opinions laden with signs of approbation or disapprobation; or of customs long established or recently in vogue but likely to be during the individual's life-time perpetuated; or of private privilege or private vengeance; or of reward and punishment stamped with the authority of law, or legislative resolution, or government commission. Thus is the social rod laid heavy on the individual's shoulders. No person can go far toward the stage when he inclines to take himself more intelligently and deliberately in hand, to block out for himself a course of conduct and adapt to its pursuit the means which he has learned to believe will be most likely to prove successful — no person can go far toward this stage, I say, without becoming aware that society has already laid constraining and guiding hands

on him, and does *not* propose ever to let him go. Even in the hereafter, if the individual expects, whether with hopeful longing or shrinking dread, any hereafter, he will find himself under this law of ethical causation. There, too, he will be, not simply as *a lone individual*, for he never can be that, — but also and chiefly as a member of a social whole.

Undoubtedly this fact, that generations of preceding men, under partially similar conditions to those which surround us, have determined how we ought to do, and how we ought to like to do, and how we must do, whether we like so to do, or not, is a most fortunate thing for the sanity of our moral conduct. It is more than this; it is the indispensable condition of their being any moral conduct possible for us. Imagine ourselves, even if endowed at birth with far more wisdom and insight into moral principles than we can ever acquire, set down in a world with no established system of morals! Neither prolonged reasoning nor profound insight would serve to instruct us with respect to the proper course of conduct, or the exactly right deed, in some of the least complicated situations of our daily life. About the things of morality we should not know more, but rather less, if we separated ourselves from all our fellow men and went to dwell in inaccessible recesses of the forest or on the heights of the mountain's top. To know what we ought to do even there, as still

both living animals and rational men, we should need to have learned from the race, and to practise what we had learned from the race.

Now so imperative and wide-embracing are the counsel and the command of the social factors of moral evolution in their effect upon the individual, that not a few professional moralists, and a great multitude of laymen in their practice, are fain to consider these factors, under the general title of "custom," to be the reservoir for a sufficient supply of the solvent for all the moral problems. But we cannot identify custom and morality. The moment we throw into its baldest and most nakedly ugly form this body of a moral principle, the man of the right mind shrinks from it with a sort of concealed or half-patent horror. Who that is really in earnest in his search for an answer to the question, *What ought I to do?* would take with satisfaction to himself, and hug with a cool brain and a warm heart, the ethical principle: "Always do as the prevalent custom advises you to do"? Thus you may learn how to steal and yet keep out of jail; to commit adultery and keep your place in respectable society; to be an accredited member of some church, enjoy its privileges, and yet quite miss the power of the spirit of Jesus over your inner life.

We are not contending that those who find in custom, as falling somehow — and yet it must be confessed very haltingly and obscurely —

under the laws of a so-called economic or biological evolution, do in general face this morally repugnant way of stating its unquestioned authority to decide for the individual his personal obligation. They seldom venture to identify custom with righteousness, that which is in practice with that which ought to be. Just now we are trying to open up a more preliminary and rather different phase of the general question. We are trying to find out its meaning. And we seem to see that, while its meaning undoubtedly implies many and complicated considerations of an existing social order, in relation to the moral obligations of the individual, it also implies something more which has eminently to do with his peculiar constitution as an individual. Or, as we have already said the question, *What ought I to do?* is a question the answer to which involves a large and profound conception of what it is to be a person.

In order to make more clear the meaning of our question it is, therefore, necessary to consider four particular groups of thoughts, ideas, and emotions, which are especially embodied in its very constitution. The first of these four is this: The inquiry, *What ought I to do?* has reference only to persons and to personal relations. It is *I*, a person, who asks this question. In its maturer and more deliberate forms it is always a question which involves and reveals, more than any other question which it is possible to raise, the extent,

the depths, and heights of the rational nature of man. We have no reason to suppose that the most intelligent and highly trained of the lower animals ever asked itself, much less ever brooded over or sought counsel about, any similar inquiry. The animals do, indeed, show almost unmistakable signs of emotions resembling moral shame, of personal loyalty, and of self-sacrifice. Perhaps we are not to be led away into doubt about the inward quality, from the ethical point of view, by such authentic stories (and they are innumerable) as Lloyd Morgan tells of the cow in the steppes of Asia, which, after steadfastly refusing to be milked unless she could show her motherly tenderness by licking the effigy of her calf, proceeded at once, when she had broken it open, to eat complacently the straw with which the effigy had been stuffed! For are there not human cannibals? and, Are there not innumerable mothers in Christendom who neglect and abhor their own offspring? Still, the strain on our credulity is rather too severe when we try to picture to ourselves the trained horse or learned dog deliberating over a problem of conduct with a sense of moral obligation in any definite form brooding over him, and whispering or demanding recognition, as rationally entitled to be a prime factor in its solution.

To be sure — to take again the charitable side of a somewhat extreme concessiveness — men do not by any means always or even customarily,

decide the moral problem in any highly rational way. They, too, the oftener act from habit, or from impulse,—often enough, from almost purely animal impulse, — or from a not altogether worthy fear of prevailing custom or of the opinion of others. Even if the unreflective way of neglecting or dodging rather than answering the moral problem were much more frequent than it is, this would not destroy the force of the truth for which we are contending. In all the various fields of human activity there is a majority control from factors that are automatic, instinctive, blindly impulsive or only half-conscious. But the real nature of the personality is revealed only when it breaks through and rises above this level of physiological mechanism and animal-psychical organization. What *moral* personality essentially is, we can learn only when we see it at its highest and best. A sure mark — and there is no surer mark — of this highest and best is the ability to raise with a clear consciousness of its import, and to answer with a deliberate choice, the question, *What, then, ought I to do?* And so far as any animal, four-footed and long-haired or otherwise, now possesses or in future develops this ability, it can lay valid claim to one of the most conspicuous of the specific tokens by which we know the person as more than a mere animal.

Another aspect of the claim that the strictly moral question has reference only to persons and

to personal relations is not quite so easy to establish beyond reasonable doubt. Doubtless, only a person can ask the moral question; but is it true that the doing to which the question has reference concerns only the treatment of persons, the behavior of the person only as respects purely personal relations?

Not a few of the older systems of morals, in their attempts at classification, recognized duties to the animals and even duties to things. That the way a man treats things, whether belonging to himself or to another, and even when the thing has no obvious owner, may be considered as a matter of moral concernment, there is no reason to doubt. To abuse things, to use them wrongfully or wastefully, is to conduct oneself in a way not quite satisfactory from the moral point of view. This is especially true when the things thus treated are things that have life in them. To hack a fine old tree, to tear in pieces a blooming shrub, or pull apart a beautiful flower, gives a certain shock to feeling which, when analyzed, seems almost as much ethical as it is æsthetical. And, indeed, in all such matters, as well as in those of greater importance, the two kinds of feeling are closely akin. Much more does our indignation rise when we survey acres of blackened stumps and fallen half-burned trees, brought to this sad state by some careless band of hunters or some ruthless lumber company. Nor does this indignation seem to be merely a manner of

deploring an economic blunder. It cannot be admitted, however, that such vague feelings are indicative of a rational belief that mere things have rights of their own which persons are bound to respect. That persons have rights in things, and that in dealing with things one person may easily violate another person's rights, is easy enough to understand. The right of the private person or of the public to enjoy the thing in its perfection, or in the height of its beauty, might make the destruction of a tree or the blackening of a landscape a moral wrong before it had been made a crime by any statute.

There is, however, something still subtler about all this, and of an evolutionary character with its roots lying far backward in human history. Time was when all tribes, and nearly all individuals in all tribes, saw in every thing which had life the indwelling spirit or the temporary abode of one akin to themselves, and sensitive — prepared either to reward or to avenge — about the way in which men treated the material form in which it had enshrined itself. To defile the spring was to insult its spirit; to worship the shrub or plant with its mysterious power to heal or to poison was to propitiate its indwelling demon; the treatment of the sacred tree was identical with that of the very god whose life it thinly veiled or clothed in mystery. If we call a feeling of respect for every form of life a superstition, it is a superstition that lingers in the

blood of the race,— however diminished in the clearness of its mistaken conception, and however weakened in definite connection with its object. In the special form of a profound feeling of kinship with nature, this same mental and quasi-moral attitude is the sentiment inspiring much of the best of poetry and the finest examples of the pictorial art. It is also one of the most potent excitements and the firmest bases of religious worship.

The personal reference on which the moral quality of all conduct depends is, if not less indirectly, much more intensely felt in man's treatment of the lower animals. Unless restrained by religious scruples, like those of the Jain who will not eat after lamp-light in the evening, lest he attract some moth by its flame; or by some form of superstition like that which prevents the Hindū from killing the cobra, lest its spirit, or that of one of the cobra's ancestors, avenge the murder; men in general think it quite right to treat most of the lower animals as though inferior to themselves in personal dignity. Here again, strange distinctions intervene to prevent the smooth flowing of any strict rule of conduct. To kill the sacred cow and feed with its flesh one's starving children may appear the most awful sacrilege for the Hindū priest who would commend the self-murder by suttee of the childless widow whose property he wished to control, or ascribe merit to the murderer of the English-

man who had slaughtered the cow. In all this, however, — as it seems to us, — the thought underlying remains the same. We regard the animals as entitled to "good" treatment, according to the way in which we endow them with, and regard them as related to, our own personal life.

The truth is most patent in a rational and honorable form among those individuals and peoples who have attained the higher stages of moral culture. We recommend the wholesale extermination of flies and mosquitoes, but we reprehend the small boy who takes pleasure in pulling off their wings. We bring corrective and punitive pains to bear upon men and even upon children, who have stepped out of the morally correct path; but we abhor the adults, and regard with awful forebodings the children, who show a kind of horrid pleasure in torturing others of their own kind. Is this *mere* sympathy with the pains of the animals? Is it *mere* kindly appreciation of what the human being must be suffering as judged by an act of imagination putting us in the sufferer's place? We do not think that it is. At least, it is not *merely* this; it is this, but it is also something more profound and more intimate to our present theme. It is a lawful, a spiritual shrinking with painful fear and abhorrence before the disrespect to his own personality, the breach in the very core of personal life, which such conduct both implies and

creates. To take pleasure in the pain of other beings is inhuman, is unworthy of the most untutored candidate for the distinction of a truly personal life.

But, second, the meaning of the question, *What ought I to do?* becomes clear only when we have discovered with what kind of doing the question is concerned. If by "doing" we understand mere acting, mere accomplishing of some kind of an effect, we have as yet no clew to the real nature of our problem. The doing which comes under strictly moral considerations must be at least a species of *Conduct.* And there is an important difference — the rather, there are a number of important differences — between action and conduct properly so-called. A machine acts — right or wrong. We may even speak of it as behaving well or ill. But when we speak of conduct as an affair of moral concernment we imply something more. The action must be consciously performed or bear traces of habits consciously formed in the past. It must appear somehow to emanate from the Self, to be an affair of the will so-called, or the expression of a habit to some extent voluntarily shaped.

There is much indeed to furnish evidence for that theological orthodoxy, which traces itself back to Augustine and bases itself on Calvin; but which has besides been not a little strengthened by the modern science of the conditions governing heredity. Evil tendencies, as esti-

mated from the higher points of view secured by centuries of moral evolution, have the appearance and the force of habits established, as it were, in the blood of the race by the conscious wrong-doing of centuries of our ancestors. Whether these are the results of a moral fall, as orthodoxy was once accustomed to teach, or relics of the lower moral condition out of which the currents of human life have been slowly rising, as modern science likes to assume, does not concern our present inquiry. Whether we are compelled in any case to assign the distinctive feeling of moral approbation, of guilt in the stricter sense, to actions which are not subject to the individual's more or less deliberate choice, is just now of even less concern. Conduct, as action that is conscious and voluntary, is the subject with which morality has to do.

Another characteristic of that action with which the moral question chiefly is concerned, is this: Conduct implies the consciousness of an end, and some knowledge of the means necessary for the attainment of an end. The machine behaves well or ill, indeed; but it does not know its own purpose or consider the means for the satisfactory realization of that purpose. The moral person must be so equipped or so developed as to be able to do this. Indeed, doing this is a part of that doing which is worthy to be called conduct.

In thus defining conduct as distinguished from

mere action, we are not limiting unduly the sphere of conduct, the truly moral sphere, in man's case. We are, the rather, extending it over its complete legitimate domain. For in man's case, all his doing may become a species of conduct. As we have elsewhere said ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 11): "Moral action is not, indeed, a specific kind of action, set apart, as it were, for some definite species of external performances, to the exclusion of other species. In fact, the presence of ethical ideals is to be discerned in everything which man consciously and voluntarily does. Higher or lower degrees of these characteristics of all conduct are actually found as far back in history, as low down in ethical and intellectual degradation, as we can follow the development of humanity. In his eating the adult human being does not merely *feed*. In his drinking he does not merely *swill* his drink. He raises the social cup, he pours out a libation to the gods; and the gods at any rate must be treated politely by the most shameless and gluttonous of cannibals. And where, as among the various Hindū castes in India, custom and morality and religion are so confused as to constitute a pretty complete enslavement of all the activities and interests of human life, the necessity and validity of this distinction are all the more to be emphasized."

But much more than this is true, and in a most important way. It is not external per-

formances which alone constitute the legitimate sphere of the moral problem. As has already been said: thoughts, opinions, emotions, and purposes constitute also the kind of doing about which men ask themselves whether they ought, or ought not. Ought I to think this? is by no means always a simple question of logic or a problem to be solved like one taken from a book on arithmetic or algebra. It is often a problem of the moral life, a question which cannot be solved without revealing and confirming character. How should I feel about this? or, How should I feel toward this or the other person? — these are not questions merely of social or public policy; they are also questions the answer to which wells out of, and ebbs back into, the deepest springs of the moral Self.

But there is yet another distinction which must be clearly made if we are to understand the full meaning of the inquiry, *What ought I to do?* And this is the most important of all the distinctions which define the true sphere of morality. Such is the distinction between *the fact of that-which-is* and *the idea of that-which-ought-to-be*. We are not now raising a mere question of history; although we shall have to take history largely into our confidence in order satisfactorily to answer the question we are raising. Nor can we get its answer simply by observing, however acutely and in broad cosmopolitan fashion, the actual ways of behaving

themselves which stamp in a characteristic manner the various tribes and peoples of earth's millions. For our present purpose, eat human flesh, when you are among cannibals, or hunt human heads, when you are living with the wild tribes of Formosa or of the Philippines, is no whit less helpful than the time-honored maxim, "When you are in Rome, do as the Romans do." Indeed, when you are in India, the maxim, "Do in many respects as do the Anglo-Indians who have grown wise in matters of behavior through long residence there," may be a matter of prudence; and the prudent care of one's health and the husbanding of one's bodily resources is no mean virtue. Thus, to follow the custom *may* become matter of grave moral concernment. But this very fact serves to emphasize the distinction upon which we are insisting. Again we are forbidden to identify the simple fact of custom and the conduct which our idea assures us ought to be.

Now the words "ought to do," like the words "ought to be," imply some sort of an idea, or mental image of a pattern, to which the fact may be referred and with which it may be compared. Such an idea we are wont to call an "ideal." An ideal is an idea of that which is better than the actual; or sometimes, but rarely, of that which, amongst all the actual, is the best conceivable and needs no excellences or virtues to be added to complete its perfection. Thus we sometimes say — generally in a burst of generous

or thoughtless enthusiasm: — That poem or that painting is "ideal." We may even speak of the workmanship of the artisan, or of the inventor of a piece of mechanism, in similar terms. But there is apt to be much exaggeration in all this; and if such praise were in general really true, it would be a misfortune both to the workman and to the race. For ideals are intended, in the Divine economy, to nourish an irritating or exciting dissatisfaction with all that only is, but does not as yet conform with our advancing notion of that which ought to be.

The moral ideal — the idea of conduct to which the fact of conduct ought to correspond — is peculiar, not only as idea, but especially as ideal. Of material things, of things which have to our thought no semblance of life in them, we say that they ought to be or to work in this way; and, on the contrary, ought not to be or to work in that way. Imagination might picture an ideal machine as one that would work wholly without friction; but this is an ideal which can never be actualized. An ideal machine, then, might the piece of workmanship be considered which came the nearest to a maximum of efficiency and a minimum of friction. In the true realm of the ideal, of the ideas that have value, the poem, the painting, the musical composition, the artistic achievement which best satisfies those who best know the canons and the higher aims of the art, deserves in a way to be called a fine

example of the ideal. But seldom or never does the artist himself feel the satisfaction of having achieved in fact that, than which no better can even be imagined or thought. His ideal is ever higher and above his realized fact.

In judging natural objects and scenes our method is somewhat similar but by no means the same. It is not enough similar to make it possible, from this point of view at least, to treat of ethics as a purely natural science. The rather must it be — whatever else it is or is not — a study of the ideal. We do hesitate, however, to criticise harshly, or in an unrestricted way to commend, the works of nature as viewed from the point of view of our human ideals. Some natural objects are, indeed, made in such a way that they seem to our minds quite ideally beautiful, or ideally serviceable to what we seem bound to conjecture is their, as the phrase is, "natural aim." But other things seem horrid and ugly, or so misshapen and overgrown, like the dinosaurs and ichthyosaurs, that they *deserve* the fate of extinction which *in fact* came to them. Such monsters and freaks *ought not* ever to have come into existence; or, having somehow by favoring circumstances or brute weight and strength fought their way into being, they ought, by the weight of gravity and the superior strength of natural forces, to have been somewhat speedily suppressed.

So, too, we are strongly inclined to regard much

of the behavior of Dame Nature as grossly inconsiderate or horribly cruel, — highly immoral on the surface, if not clear to the core. How can she so disregard the suffering of her children and her own ruthless waste of countless multitudes of the best of her offspring? If she affords the sublimity of the starlit sky and the glorious coloring of the setting sun to all eyes alike; why has she made the blinding of so many eyes, both from within and from without, so inevitable? And what about the earthquake and the volcanic eruption, or the scourge of cholera and the Black Death, as regarded in the light of purely ethical codes for disciplining and improving the human race?

Now there are two ways of regarding such questions as the foregoing, the merest mention of which may suggest a dim ray of light to be thrown upon our problem by future reflection in more intense and broad form. Let us, first of all, say to ourselves that such questions as these have absolutely no application to the system of natural phenomena or to any part of it. Let us agree with ourselves that Nature, even when you spell the word with a capital (an honor we generally reserve for the Divine Being of the World), is really no sort of a "dame," — beldame, or otherwise; and that, when we speak of it all in terms of personification, we are using an absurd figure of speech. But somehow this purely machine-like conception of the system of things

does not seem quite to satisfy the minds and hearts of those who most loudly proclaim their confidence in it. For when this same system of things, or any considerable part of it, treats them to unmerited pain or disappointment, they do not consider the absurdity of regarding such treatment as throwing any light on the character of the source, whether it be good or ill. Few men, when the grievance they suffer is personal, can quite refrain from returning to the giver the appropriate personal attitude of thought and feeling. But how can one speak of ends and aims and behavior *as though* it had moral quality, when the talk is all of a purely impersonal self-evolving and incomprehensible mechanism? And yet it is an almost inescapable part of our human conception of this same machine, called Nature, that it should be regarded and addressed in personal terms.

Quite the opposite is the attitude toward the operations of Nature assumed by the Stoic slave Epictetus. "What, then, must my leg be lame?" (the leg was his very own), he asks in one of his Discourses. "And is it for one paltry leg, wretch, that you accuse the universe? Can you not forego that, in consideration of the whole? Can you not give up something? Can you not gladly yield it to him who gave it?" Still farther away, on the opposite side, are those who, when the world of things and of men is crushing them, pray the prayer of Jesus: "If it be possible, let

this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

Unlike as are these personal attitudes toward the natural system, toward the world of things and of men, as respects the spirit which prompts and expresses itself in them, they still have one common characteristic. They all assume a quasi-moral character to the universe as related to affairs which are certainly of the gravest moral concernment to the individual man and to the entire human race. There is also this common feature to these differing attitudes; and it is a feature that accounts in no small measure for the differences themselves. The universe is a vast and mysterious affair. No one aim, or set of rules for strictest observance in its behavior, whether as derived from the points of view held by the positive sciences, or from those accepted by the faiths of religion, avails to explain it all. What is this complex system trying to bring about? What is its *idea* to accomplish, the end toward which its self-evolution points forward? What is the ideal to which, fraught with most of happiness or fraught with most of suffering to the human race, the World-whole is ever reaching forward? And what in particular does it mean to do with me? Is it friend or foe to my highest happiness, not to say my loftiest attainments in morality?

Here, then, a most curious and quite generally painful conflict arises. Nature seems to simulate what we are forced to regard as moral behavior;

behavior which, at any rate, constitutes the chief determinates of our moral ideals, and of our rules for estimating the moral quality of our own doing. But nature does not appear altogether to conform to our ideals and to the rules which she, whether arbitrarily or rationally, imposes on us. Again, then, we are thrown back on the conclusion that, although the question, *What ought I to do?* has no meaning except as applying to a distinction between fact of what is done and some ideal of a better thing which might conceivably be done, we cannot derive the full nature of this distinction from external sources. We must look into the soul and there discover what are the so-called faculties concerned in moral action; and most especially, what is the ideal which the soul sets itself as a mental pattern to incite and guide its better and better doing, its true and rational moral evolution.

The fuller quest for the moral ideal must wait its proper place among the several questions subordinate to our main inquiry. But there is one thing which may as well be said at once, for its truth is beyond all dispute and is not much liable even to controversy. And this is that truth: The moral ideal is the ideal of conduct in social relations. In saying this we have harked back, without bending our ear to the far cry, and have come upon the same trail; and we listen again to the call which summons us in the same direction, if we wish to be "in at the capture of

the brush." We see again that the question, *What ought I to do?* concerns the gaining and the following of a personal ideal, the conducting of ourselves as persons and in personal relations, according to an idea. The idea is an ideal, which evinces the proper, the improved pattern, of personal character and of personal intercourse. We must start out from this point of view and keep as close as possible to the trail which it will blaze through the thickest forest for us, if we would emerge into the clearer and fuller light on the other side. It would be a convenience, perhaps, if we could adopt the major premise from which the same slave but Stoic philosopher sallies forth to conquer all the practical problems of life in his Discourse: "How, from the doctrine that God is the Father of men, we may proceed to its Consequences." For he truly says, "*If* a person could be persuaded of this principle as he ought, that we are all originally descended from God, and that he is the father of gods and men, I conceive he would never think of himself meanly or ignobly." But for us it would be both illogical and unhistorical at once to assume that "if." Before we "proceed to the consequences" of this preliminary survey of the meaning of our inquiry, we must add another to the distinctions already mentioned, which the question itself seems irresistibly to imply.

The question, *What ought I to do?* is, essentially considered, a social question. That much of

the answer to this question is forced upon us by society, we have already seen; that all its answers must regard the interests of society, we now confess. No individual can so separate himself from other men, or can find himself so separated by what may appear to him as an unsought and abhorred destiny, so stark alone in the world of men, as altogether to deprive his individual question, even when asked under just those special circumstances, of its social implications and social concernment. If he is about to commit suicide, because the world which "owes him a living" has, instead of furnishing that living to his mind, deprived him of the last penny and of the last apparent chance of earning another penny, still he "*ought*" to give the world one more chance and yet another after that, to pay the debt it owes. He — the penniless — *ought not* to act as impulse from despair prompts him to act, without considering whether it is right to leave to others an example of cowardice, and to cause them the expense of a pauper's funeral, or the far greater crime of refusing to make that burial decent and pitifully sympathetic with the woes and failures of one of their fellows. To say this is not to proclaim the absolute immorality of suicide; it is not even to decide upon the moral right or wrong of the deed proposed, but to show that no deed can be taken apart from the rights and wrongs of the society in the midst of which the deed is done.

But every lonely individual's deed is a matter of social significance, and of judgment from the social point of view, in a deeper meaning than that which has thus far been indicated. Without applying some social standard, no individual can possibly understand what he himself really is as a moral being, or what it is really his duty — no matter how peculiar and isolated the circumstances — to do. Of each individual, in all circumstances, Goethe's dictum remains true:

> "The gage that from himself he takes
> Measures him now too small and now too great."

In other words: For self-understanding a knowledge of other men is indispensable. For arriving at some reasonable conclusion as to how we ought to act, it is necessary to exercise our powers of observation to determine how others actually do act, and our powers of imagination to picture to ourselves how these others ought to act. We may be tolerably sure that we shall not ordinarily exceed the measure of obligation which ought to be self-laid upon ourselves, if we adopt for its standard the obligation we lay upon the other man. This is the parable of the mote in our brother's eye; and the whole stick of timber that is in our own eye. Wholly out of social connections and relations, the origin, the nature, the rule, and the ideal of morality are unobtainable and even inconceivable.

Two remarks may fitly close this attempt to

expose the meaning of the question, *What ought I to do?* Although it is a question which goes beyond the facts of conduct as they are apparent when embodied in custom and in law; although it is a question which does not emerge in consciousness, is indeed no question at all, until we recognize the presence of the ideal, it is not a question that deals with thoughts merely or that cuts itself loose from a firm footing in the real and hard facts of human life. Indeed, the ideal, or ideas of value, with which the question comes to deal, and which its very form of statement presupposes, are themselves facts. As Wundt has well said: "The estimate of the value of facts is also itself a fact, and a fact which must not be overlooked when it is there to see."

Another important truth to be borne in mind during all our subsequent work in raising and answering questions is this: There has been an evolution in morals, whether under this term we bring the various theories and doctrines as to what conduct ought to be, the ideals of morality, or the historical statement of the doings of men, the assemblage of facts as to what the right and wrong of conduct have actually been. Hence the mixture of considerations and interests that are inextricably involved in the inquiry, whether raised for the individual or for the race: "What ought to have been, and what ought now and in the future to be done, when doing is regarded from the moral point of view?"

CHAPTER II

WHENCE COMES THE MESSAGE: "I OUGHT"?

TO reflect seriously on the meaning of the question, *What ought I to do?* can scarcely fail to afford one something more than a mere doubtful clew to an answer. The answer thus afforded, however, although it is instructive and inspiring, is somewhat too general and vague to be wholly satisfactory. But before we pass on with our attempt to develop it into fuller details, and in this way render it more practically available and valuable, let us sum up the results of the analysis completed in the last chapter. To give it the practical look which our main purpose requires us to keep constantly in view, we will throw our analysis into the form of certain exhortations: and there should be four such exhortations, corresponding to the four groups of ideas, types of thinking, and experiences of emotion and sentiment, which were found to be embodied in the question itself.

Whoever, then, once raises intelligently and deliberately the question, What ought I to do? should exhort himself to remember that he is a

person and is capable of entering into personal relations; and that he should behave accordingly. This implies some appreciation of the worth of personal life and a peculiar respect for all persons — one's own self and all other selves. In Kant's celebrated treatise on the "Practical Reason" he at first makes the essence of all morality consist in respect for the moral law. But he is quickly forced virtually to admit that this lands the subject in mere abstractions; for it is only *persons* that can form the conception of such a law, or have the power of will necessary to obey or to disobey it. And so, after quoting *Fontenelle's* saying, "I bow before a great man, but my mind does not bow," Kant goes on to declare: "Before a humble, plain man in whom I perceive uprightness of character in a higher degree than I am conscious of it in myself, *my mind bows*, whether I choose it or not, and though I bear my head never so high that he may not forget my superior rank."

But, again, whoever raises this question should remember that, being a person, he is capable of conduct, as distinguished from mere action; and that it is to conduct that the rules and injunctions of morality apply. To answer the question, What ought I to do? it is therefore necessary to act with a consciousness of ends, in view of mental pictures of that which is preferable in conduct, from the moral point of view; and with the exercise of choice in order to realize this

preference in habits of doing as well as individual deeds.

And now, signalling for selection the most conspicuous and easily discernible characteristic of that which is moral, whoever asks the question must be ever diligent to answer it in view of the message, "I ought"; or, — to reverse the guide-board to right conduct and read its other side, — of the message: "I ought not." This message, — as we shall see more fully later on, — whether delivered in the affirmative or in the negative, involves both the feelings and the judgment of a person, of a rational as distinguished from an animal life.

That to raise the question, What ought I to do? is also to raise the inquiry, "How is my doing going to affect others?" is an inference so obvious that, when stated in this indefinite form, it needs no argument in its defence. The moral being cannot act without regard to the consequences of his actions in their social bearing. But of all the puzzling subordinate problems which arise under the main question, those which are shaped and determined by the relations of the individual to his social environment are the most numerous and the most puzzling. Any partial answer to their specific and concrete bewilderment must, for the most part, be picked up by the way as we wander over all the domain of the moral problem; but more particularly, must be learned by experience in the not too tender school of the

practical life. For, as Aristotle long ago said: "The virtues are all habits or *trained* faculties."

And now we, too, take up our quest for more concrete and particular and practically available answers to the inquiry, What ought I to do? with our memories well laden with these four important considerations. We are going to try to determine what sort of an ideal, in its various aspects or forms of manifestation, has the right to impose on us the obligation to follow it in our social relations, with due respect to our own personal life and to the personal life that is not ours. Perhaps this quest may lead us to find in the one ideal Personal Life the ultimate and inexhaustible source of all that appears in the sphere of that which we call morality.

We will begin with a more detailed study of the conception embodied in that little word "ought" as distinguished from the other little word "can." Here surely is some kind of a distinction between ability to do — so to say, *merely* as ability — and *obligation to preference* and choice as between two conceivable ways of doing, for both of which we may have, if not equal, at least sufficient, ability.

But what we expect to get out of this message, "I ought," may be taken in two different yet closely related ways. We may study to some good purpose the bare fact of this, "I ought," its origin, its significance, and its relation to the growth of the moral personality. Or we may try to derive from this form of moral conscious-

ness a system of concrete rules and maxims for the regulation of human conduct in general and of our own conduct in particular. In the one case, we take rather the psychological point of view; in the other, the historical and anthropological. In other words, we may seek knowledge about the phenomena of "oughtness" (if so uncouth but convenient a term may be pardoned), the kind of experience involved in the nascent feeling of obligation; or having determined this, we may go on to explore the content of the ought, or what the feeling and judgment of being under obligation tells us, more precisely and completely, as to the habits and deeds that fall under the designations of "right" and "wrong" conduct.

We are now to study the message contained in the words "I ought," from the first of these two points of view. What is the origin of this phenomenon of moral consciousness? What is its essential nature? And, what are the successive traceable steps in its normal development? The entire investigation into which these questions conduct us in our quest for a satisfactory answer, is almost exclusively psychological. To ethics, as studied from this point of view, psychology affords the only trustworthy introduction. It is, however, a kind of psychology which does not depend largely upon laboratory apparatus or upon the more exact methods of the experimental science; but chiefly on keenness of insight, on sympathy,

and on sound sense. The two best available sources of evidence are also the most important and the most trustworthy. Of these, the first is the normal child, of average intellectual faculty and capacity for social feeling, both of the lower and more distinctly animal type and of the type which we designate as the "higher sentiments"; — of such a child, when placed under the influences of average favoring and also hindering environment, and thus developing an adult moral consciousness which is — as all adult development necessarily is — a subtle but sure, an intricate but in spots distinctly traceable, pattern woven of threads partly received from others and partly introduced as from the free artistic, or the sadly cramped and blundering, hand of the secret Self.

The second class of data, most available for the study of this phase of the general problem, is to be found in the way the common people talk about the matter. Certainly, the average man is loath to reveal the secret and deeper workings of his own moral consciousness, especially when the revelation would bear heavily against his most patent interests. Indeed, the number is few of those who can give a quite trustworthy, not to say, an absolutely accurate, account of these workings. Fortunately, however, this is not necessary for the evidence we are now seeking. This evidence is amply illustrated by the variety of terms in which the general nature of moral

obligation is expressed, whether it be in particular a case of *I* ought, or of *you* ought, or of *the-other-fellow* ought. And men are much more free to express their true convictions, in the last two than in the first one of these three cases.

One very illumining conclusion, a light on the whole nature of man's moral life and of his social relations, institutions, and development, is easily reached when we listen to the testimony borne to our ears by the way men talk about moral obligation, or the developed form of the message of "the ought." The conclusion amply justified is this: The message of a moral obligation, the message of the ought, comes out of the whole man, and is addressed to the whole man. It is not of feeling alone, the intellect being silent and the voluntary powers dormant; nor is it a cool and unfeeling decision of judgment, which most usually and most fitly answers to the appeal or mandate of the moral consciousness. It is from my whole Self that the message, I ought, arises; it is to my whole Self that the message speaks.

Neglect of this psychological truth of the indivisible unity of the moral personality has given rise to many mistakes in the attempt to solve concrete questions of duty, to divergent systems of ethics, and to wrangling schools of moralists. They are all rebuked by the way the common people talk about matters of moral concernment. About the very same deed, as viewed in the light of the message, I ought, they say, "I feel that

I ought," or "I think that I ought," or "I know that I ought," or "I really must." The case customarily is as we have stated it in a more extended and technical treatment of the same phase of human experience ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 71 f.): "When adult men say, 'I ought,' or other words equivalent to these, they are customarily expressing a complex attitude of mind toward a particular piece of conduct. Like every other attitude of mind, that which is thus expressed, involves feeling, thought, and will. And, indeed, one may emphasize either of these three aspects of the total situation by modifying one's expression. Thus one may emphasize the emotional factor by declaring: '*I feel* (more or less intensely and unswervingly) that I ought,' or may lay stress upon the intellectual factor, the presence of judgment, by saying: '*I think* (more or less clearly, and with consciousness of the reasons or grounds) that I ought'; or, even, '*I must* indeed, and *I shall* because I ought'—in this way bringing into evidence the volitional impulse or rational mandate given to the will. Separating in thought, what cannot be found wholly apart in the actual life of the Self, the conclusion is justified that this feeling of the ought is not to be identified with any other content of human consciousness."

It has been said that the normal child, growing up under the ordinary every-day influences, offers us our best subject for the study of the origin,

nature, and course in development, of this phase of moral consciousness. The material, then, is at everybody's hand. Even in this way, the study is difficult enough. But so it is with all attempts to get "under the jacket" of the human infant, and thus attain anything which will take the place of adult intuition, or a face-to-face acquaintance with the interior of its mental life. Only by our own adult self-consciousness do we gain any approaches to an intuitive knowledge of our own here-and-now mental experiences; a face-to-face knowledge of these mental experiences in others is impossible. We, indeed, make out pretty well in our attempts at helpful guesses and working theories as to what is going on in the minds of grown men and women; yet in all these cases we are dependent upon the interpretation of signs — especially the vocal signs of articulate language — into terms of our own self-consciousness. But in the infant's case, the signs are relatively few and uncertain; and we have forgotten long ago almost if not quite all of our earliest and most formative similar experiences.

There are, however, ways of partially overcoming these difficulties, so as to make out a plausible, though sketchy and unfinished picture of how the message, I ought, dawns in the mind of the human infant; and how it rises toward noon-tide clearness or to immergence in a thick envelopment of dust and smoke, through adolescence into adult life.

It is probably in the form of an altogether obscure feeling of repulsion toward the mental picture or initiating tendency to some concrete deed, that the earliest traces of the ethical message are brought to the consciousness of the infant child of man. The message is a negation of some natural impulse, a forbidding by way of anticipation of disagreeable consequences, of some particular deed. Inwardly considered, it is not, perhaps, distinguishable from the feeling of repulsion that results from the infant's successful attempt to reach the flame of the candle which so fixates his eyes and draws to it so irresistibly his hand. Indeed, this stock example of the way that nature disciplines her babies in their nervous-muscular reactions, although ordinarily deemed neutral so far as its moral character may be called in question, might, under certain conditions, serve equally well for the example of the kind of learning, the sources of which our question binds us to seek. Grown somewhat older, the adventurous boy finds that "fooling" with the ears or tail of his puppy is followed by results which quite certainly "ought" to be escaped. In this way, mere things teach the child how to avoid the painful consequences of such injudicious uses of his hands, ambitious of exercising themselves to the production of impressive and considerable effects. Thus far, the "better-not" is scarcely, if at all, distinguishable from the "ought-not," so far as the internal

character of the two mental attitudes is concerned. Experience of evil consequences shapes the behavior of the growing boy. But the behavior is not, as yet, conduct; the tendency to "skip" this temptation to act, the next time it occurs, more nearly resembles a result of mere animal caution than the virtue of prudence or wisdom.

What is needed to convert such a reaction into the first semblance of a truly moral act, a doing which verges upon, if it does not enter clear over into the domain of conduct, is this: the prohibition must have a social origin; it must come by way of injunction, punishment, or other form of resistance from some person. So when the eager infant, as yet all too ignorant of any distinction between "thine" and "mine," directs his first act of grabbing or "grafting" things which do not belong to him, toward his older brother's apple or toy, he gets his indispensable experience in the way of suffering for the breach of one of the most sacred and fundamental of human rights. For the impulse to possession arises in this same tendency to be the first to lay your hand on what stirs up desire; and the basis of social justice is laid, on one side of its towering edifice, in the lawful determination to assert your right to what you have thus laid your hand upon.

Even in the case of the lighted candle or the snappish dog, the more distinctively moral element may be introduced by a command from

mama, or from the older sister left in charge, or the hired nurse. "Don't do that"; or "You mustn't do so," when followed up by some kind of penalty by the author of the command, does a service for the awakening of moral consciousness which it is quite impossible for the burn of the candle or the bite of the cur to perform. As the manifestations of the infant's determination "to go it alone" become more numerous and more shrewd and complicated in form, the methods of the social rebuff and of the social retribution increase in somewhat the same measure. At least, as respects the cultivation of some of the more fundamental and patent of the virtues, the social environment does its best to keep abreast, or at the worst, not so very far behind, the increasing greediness and craft of its more disobedient individual members.

In the case of the few children who are reared in the midst of a refined and judiciously directing and bracing moral environment, the earliest means for repulsion of natural impulses and for the distribution of penalties for their wrong indulgence, are, of course, of a markedly different kind. But we are convinced that the beginnings of the message in the ought, the dawn of that feeling of aversion, the other side of which is a feeling of preference for the opposite, is in most, if not in absolutely all cases, essentially the same. For the oath, the slap, the cuffing, or the starving, may be substituted the grieved look of the mother,

the denial of her caress, or of the anticipated half-hour of play with papa. If the disobedience or other form of wrong-doing is a second or third offence, some severer though equally kindly form of discipline may be contrived. But the "law" comes in the simpler forms of social environment — the family, the neighborhood, the school — as it comes in the Mosaic code and in all other codes, chiefly and in its most primitive form, as a "thou-shalt-not."

It would be a mistake, however, to confine our account to this negative aspect of the dawning of moral consciousness in the young of the human species. "Thou-shalt" follows as a matter of course upon the heels of every "Thou-shalt-not." There is a "better-this" for almost every "better-not-that." This side, or form, of moral consciousness also arises as a vague and ill-defined feeling under the incitement of social conditions which are not as yet in any respect apprehended; and which are, perhaps, never in most instances clearly understood. Even under the most unfavorable or positively corrupting circumstances, the human infant soon discovers that, if some ways of behaving himself are followed by reprehension and painful consequences, some other ways of behaving are followed by experiences which it is pleasant for him to have. If he obviously disobeys, he suffers for it; if he secretly disobeys, he is apt to be found out, and then he is apt to suffer as well. But if he obviously obeys,

he at least has a better chance of escaping some suffering or enforced self-denial; and in many instances, he secures something which he can regard as a sort of reward. In all but the lowest and most unsettled and mob-like, half-chaotic forms of the social environment, amidst the influences of which the young of human kind get their earliest moral lessons, something like a regular and predictable sequence of punishment and rewards has a sort of enforced existence. It is not a sequence in which anything like perfect justice prevails; nothing amounting to the certainties of the astronomers' prediction as to the motion of the planets (the heavenly bodies once called "the wandering") is quite attainable for the youthful observer. But if "he watches out," he discovers pretty well how to adjust himself to the rising or lowering temperature. Thus he falls into habits which more or less happily correspond to what has been called "nature's first law" for human individuals, the law of self-preservation. So far forth he is esteemed by his social environment a "pretty good fellow"; though "a bit odd," if he tries to make and to justify any aberrations from its customs.

But here again, if the individual has the good fortune to be brought up among the good few who train their young to toughness and generosity in bearing, as well as to intelligent and wisely altruistic doing, the expertness and satisfactions which belong of right to the predominance of the positive

side of moral feeling become increasingly conspicuous.

In this process of arousing, fixing, and developing the consciousness of the ought, there is another closely allied form of feeling, the worth and the services of which can by no means safely be neglected. Indeed, it is in the many forms of manifesting this feeling that the arousement and the culture of personal responsibility largely consist. This is the feeling of (moral) approbation or its opposite, the feeling of disapprobation. Here, too, we have to note how the more distinctively moral, the rational sentiment of which only persons are capable, emerges from dimly conscious experiences that seem scarcely distinguishable from the mental reactions of the lower animals. The child who resentfully "chucks" the stone on which he has stubbed his toe, or the man who condemns it to eternal perdition, manifests a kind of disapproval which is no more moral than that of the cobra who strikes the leg that has carelessly brushed against it. All sensitive beings, animals of the lower species, as well as that human animal we call rational, *disapprove* of what causes them pain or seems in any way to threaten their bodies or their possessions. Here, again, as always and everywhere, we find the foundations of the moral and the spiritual laid in the animal and the natural. And what other plan could the moral philosopher, whose head is most in the clouds of illusion and his lungs accustomed to the most rarefied air of

a sentiment-like ether, possibly devise, or when devised, possibly make work, in a world constituted as is that in which man is involved? But it is the distinctive feature of the human being that this feeling of approbation, and its opposite, the feeling of disapprobation, can be aroused in a relatively disinterested or wholly unselfish way, and applied to the good and the bad of conduct in social — that is, in personal — relations.

It is probable that the most impulsive and thoughtless ways of checking or furthering the conduct of the young, even in the lowest forms of society as judged from the moral point of view, are habitually something more than mere animal resentment. They are the genuine and not wholly feigned issue of the moral feelings of approbation and disapprobation. It is, in general, necessary for the most brutal father and the most whimsical mother to feel the right to command in order to justify the right to punish disobedience or to reward obedience in the child. And the oath, the blow, the starving, with which the child is punished, or the cake, the kiss, the kind word with which the child is rewarded, do really in some crude way express a truly moral feeling.

But the most important thing to notice in explanation of the nature and growth of the moral life is that the child appropriates to himself these same feelings of approbation and disapprobation. To a certain extent, and under certain often recurring circumstances, he begins — as

the phrases are — either "to kick himself" for having done the wrong thing, or "to pat himself on the shoulder" for the thing that turned out to have been right. Nor can we say that this self-approbation always remains merely the feeling of a sensitive animal, a wholly non-moral affair. It takes on the semblance of a moral character just as soon as the approbation is self-adjudged for a deed that conforms to the social estimate of the right and the wrong of conduct.

Still more complicated and dependent on a marked advance in intellectual development is that peculiar feeling of merit, or its opposite feeling of ill-desert, which the so-called "moral agent" now assigns to himself or to others. This is a truly moral respect for what is of supreme worth in the personal life. We might almost think ourselves justified in holding that it is the only legitimate and reasonable form of *self-respect* (moral respect for the true Self). But in order to hold this its lawful place among the various forms of self-appreciation, to certain of which the average man is too much addicted, the feeling of *moral* merit must be severely distinguished from Pharisaical pride and from vain-glorious self-conceit. Neither is it to be identified with the theological consciousness of being sure of having "accepted the terms of salvation" as determined by one's creed, or with pious satisfaction at having gained title to the ranks of the "perfected."

In some such way the feelings which constitute and accompany the message, I ought, may be held to originate and develop as the primitive and most fundamental experiences of the personal life in respect of its attitude toward the right and wrong of conduct. But moral consciousness is more than unreasoning feeling; it must be partly, and perhaps in its highest cultivation, chiefly, a matter of ideas, of judgments, and of principles, all woven together into some fairly consistent pattern or type of moral character. The attachment of moral feeling to the intellectual and reasoning powers of human nature is plainly, in the first stages of moral development, almost exclusively due to the compulsion of the social environment. In what Plato called "the puppy-dog stage," the human being, whether still infant or grown toward physical manhood but still infantile in mind, *judges* that to be really right or really wrong, which the social atmosphere has made either genial and bracing or chilly and repulsive to his *feelings*. On the side of feeling he is most sensitive; on the side of judgment he is blind. If he gives to himself or to others any shadow of a reason why he conducts himself in this way rather than in some other, it can be only this: So the others do; or so I have been told to do; or so it pays best to do. As to any appeal to a moral law or a moral reason, he is almost if not quite incapable as well as careless, in view of such a task.

But the time comes to every adult who undergoes a normal development of the moral kind, when he is tempted — or oftener forced by some internal motive or by powerful pressure from without — to ask of himself or of others, the startling question *Why?* about some deed or course of conduct that, even under his limited category, is of moral significance. Indeed, the intelligent child who lives amidst complicated social conditions, with a number of circles of folk having differing ideas and practices that are of moral import, asks this question early. But the question Why? must have some kind of a "*because*" for its answer. And this "because" must also be received from others in accordance with one's peculiar social environment; or it must be thought out by the individual for himself. As thought is more frequently and persistently applied to the problem, the divergency in the answers arrived at becomes the greater and the more conspicuous. Here, too, however, the majority, as they have expressed themselves in the various modes of organized moral judgment and established institutions, hold the check-rein taut, and apply the whip smartly, in discipline of any coltish or more sinister desire to run away or to kick over the traces.

There are two puzzling problems connected with the manner in fact, in which moral judgments and moral principles come to be firmly attached to the moral feelings, that are of the

greatest importance both for the practice of the individual and for the theory of obligation, duty, and the moral law. Both of these problems have to do with a species of conflict. On the one hand there is the painful conflict — more frequent and more severe in proportion to the moral sensitiveness and the good-will of the individual — between what one has been trained to feel to be right and what one has come, on grounds of seemingly sufficient reasons, to judge to be right. Shall feeling be satisfied and good judgment be condemned? Or, shall judgment be vindicated by the deed which it commends, but the tender and most sacred emotions, that are so large a part of our best Self, be aggrieved and discouraged or wholly suppressed?

The other conflict, which would seem to be made forever sure to arise, since its sources are inextricably rooted in the constitution of society, is that between the alleged clarity and unchangeableness of moral principles, and the obvious and indisputable variety and ceaseless change in the rules and customs which the different peoples, classes of society, and differing ages of human history, have established in fact, to determine the right and the wrong of conduct. Is morality all a matter of evolution; or even, as so many now-a-days would have us think, a matter solely of economic or purely mechanical evolution? Or, did the greatest of ancient philosophers (Aristotle) tell the deeper truth when he declared:

"There is no human function so constant as the activities in accordance with virtue; they seem to be more permanent than the sciences themselves"? And did the greatest of the Greek tragedians (Sophocles) speak soberly, when he sang of these principles:

> "They ne'er shall sink to slumber in oblivion;
> A power of God is there, untouched by Time."

These doubts which try the soul, and put it on the rack of conflicting tendencies and emotions, under a sky of cloudy ideas and confused thoughts, are sure to be connected with efforts of the honest inquirer into the one question which puts them up to him day after day, — the question, What ought I to do? With us, however, they must wait awhile, and until we have to a somewhat greater extent disentangled certain other factors which enter into the moral problem. There are, however, one or two helpful considerations that spring out of the very nature of "the ought" in its most primitive form of intellectually unjustified and unanalyzed feeling.

It would be a grave error, and indeed an error fatal to our understanding of the entire subject, to suppose that even the earliest and vaguest moral feelings are stamped upon the soul of the human child wholly from without. On the contrary, this is, strictly taken, never quite true. They are always aroused from within; they are the normal human emotions reacting to the stim-

ulus afforded by the social environment. And however wrong or mistaken the judgments, however criminal or wicked the deeds and the courses of conduct, in their evolution under social influences, come to be, the natural moral feelings are in general true to the cause of virtue and to the character which, so far as we can follow outward or backward the history of the race, men have been accustomed to call good.

In justification of the truth just asserted there are two things noticeable about this first system of reactions by way of feeling, and its earliest development. The soul itself responds pretty generally, if not infallibly, on the side of virtue; and it responds with a certain marked preference for those virtues which, although they are the most showy, are also the most fundamentally important in the laying of the foundations of a virtuous and serviceable character. The boy who is trained at picking and stealing must display the virtues of prudence, obedience, courage, and a certain loyalty to his "pals" or to the "gang" to which he belongs. And so must the girl reveal certain virtues, who goes to Yoshiwara to procure support for a sick or needy parent, or who doubles her awful trade upon the streets of London (as one of my missionary friends told me he had not infrequently known such a girl to do) in order to purchase food and medicine for one of her disabled comrades. He is a desperately hardened person who can approve of any kind of wrong-

doing in himself without introducing it to himself clothed in the meretricious garments of some pretended virtue. Only devils can honestly say: "Evil! be thou my good." So great is the preference of unsophisticated moral feeling for what presents itself to the soul in the guise of a virtue.

But prudence, obedience, courage, and loyalty, are not fictions of virtue; the rather, are they the most fundamental of all the virtues. And the sensitive and highly cultured moral consciousness is true to its heaven-derived constitution, when it recognizes, approbates, and rewards them as such. All wrong-doing is in some of its several aspects essentially mean. But what a salve to its meanness it gains when it can be smoothed over with some semblance of a virtue, always and everywhere spontaneously recognized by the human soul as such, and spontaneously affording the feeling proper to its nature as thus recognized!

> "So in man's self arise
> August anticipations, symbols, types
> Of a dim splendor."

And now, taking this feeling of "the ought" out into the larger field, where we may compare it with all the other emotions which attach themselves to the ideas of value, we find it stands well the test. It has the characteristics which belong to them all. It has uniqueness. It is not to be confused with the feeling of fear or the desire of pleasure, or the tipping in a given direction of

natural inclination. It is, indeed, dependent for the occasion of its arousement, for its direction, and for its attachment, on the social environment; but the essential nature of the reaction evoked is unique.

We note also its universality. All normal human beings develop this feeling. In its intensity, in the activity of discrimination connected with it, and in the character of the judgments with which it consorts and which it supports or confutes, there is indefinite variability among the individual members of any community. But the message of "the ought" is the most important factor in securing a certain moral solidarity to the race. In it alone can we lay the foundations of a hope that the moral ideal will finally triumph; that, at any rate, there will be an increasing *approchement* of "that-which-in-fact-is" to "that-which-in-truth-ought-to-be," in the moral relations and the conduct toward one another, of the different portions of the race.

To the individual who asks, What ought I to do? so far as any definite advice can be given at this stage of the inquiry, a curious answer must suffice. For the question takes this shape: What ought I to do with the feeling of "the ought"? In reply two answers may be taken, "off-hand," as the phrase is. Treat it gently and with great respect. In it consists your chief title to a reasonable self-respect. To become deaf to the

message, I ought, would be to lose the power of hearing the divine voice. To blunt it is to harden the finest sensitiveness of the human soul. But with all that, one cannot take its bidding without question as though it were an emotion infallible to direct and always reasonable to justify its commands. Like all other emotions it needs to be often questioned as to its reasons, and somewhat regularly held accountable for its consequences. For morality is not all of feeling, however sacred the counsels of any particular feeling may seem to be. The voice of judgment must be heard as well.

CHAPTER III

ON THE INTENTION OF "BEING GOOD"

OF all the conceptions developed by centuries of reflective thinking, there are few, or none, at once so ostensibly practical and yet theoretically so difficult to analyze, so seemingly simple and yet in reality so complex, as that which is covered by the popular use of the word "Good." What is this thing good for? What is the good of doing this, or of learning that? Is this man or that woman good for anything? For how much is he (his credit) good? Is he a good (efficient) teacher; or a good (interesting and persuasive) preacher; or a (æsthetically) good painter; or a (morally) good man? Is the medicine good for this trouble? Does the orange taste good? Is this a good thing to do, — by the way of pity, sympathy, or the bestowal of alms? Such are some of the questions, inquiring about what is good from innumerable points of view and with innumerable selfish or benevolent ends in mind, which pester the judgment and burden the conscience, every hour of every day from one year's end to another's. But most perplexing

of all is the situation of the mind of the inquirer after that common element in all, which induces and authorizes them to make use of the same word *Good.* What is the general nature of that which men agree to call by this ambiguous and ubiquitous term?

The answer to this last question can scarcely be found in the nature of the material thing, considered apart from the person who pronounces or reluctantly admits that it really is good. The reality of any material good can scarcely be what the philosophers are accustomed to call wholly "objective." For what is pleasant to the taste, and invigorating to the health of one, is nauseating to the taste and depressing to the health of another. Nor can it be inherent in a quite compulsory way in the character of the work of pictorial or musical art. As my friend put the case, when I spoke sympathetically to him, his face all aglow with satisfaction at having rendered splendidly the second-violin part in Beethoven's matchless Quartet in B flat (Op. 130): "And even some musicians I have heard say, they do not like those last works of Beethoven; but when I hear them say that, I feel very superior."

Neither can one say that the pleasure — at least that of a sensuous sort and most immediately following — is always the test of the "goodness" of what causes any particular experience; while the experience of its opposite, of some form of pain or discomfort, is what invariably leads

us to call the other thing bad. For there are injurious foods that are pleasant to the taste. Poisons cannot be infallibly detected by the painful effects which follow their taking, whether by mistake or designedly; and for the man who wishes to commit suicide, they are eminently good. In general, medicines and surgical remedies are bitter to experience, even if good for the rescue of body or mind. And the good of anæsthetics, physical or spiritual, is not wholly to be discovered in their power to mitigate pain, but also in the way they make it possible for the severest of remedial agencies to be applied.

It is of the utmost importance, then, for the man who asks, with a wish to be rational, What ought I to do? to have some doctrine of the nature of the good, especially as this doctrine is of use in solving practical questions concerning themselves with the good and bad of conduct. The moral significance of this conception, one writer on ethics (Wundt) emphasizes in these terms: "The whole ethical vocabulary falls into two great divisions: words that denote ethical characteristics like 'good' and 'bad,' and words that indicate the emphasis put on ethical characteristics, like 'esteem' and 'contempt.'" If this is true, it follows that our judgments and feelings about the *good* of conduct, and its opposite, cover pretty much the entire sphere of morals. And, indeed, the Greek moralists treated all those subjects which we range under the conceptions of

duty, law, principles, and their exemplification by definite rules and examples, under this one title of the "Good."

There are two considerations that help us disentangle this confusion, at least far enough to see through it some prospect of a clear field on the other side in which we may hunt with improved hope of success for an answer to our main inquiry. The first of these considerations is this. The kinds of experience, and even the individual experiences, to which the words "good" and "bad" are applicable, must be as great as the variety of the different sensitive reactions to which, in kinds and in individuals, human nature is susceptible. This variety is indefinite. So then must be the variety of goods, for the species and for the individual. All the different bodily organs, physical interests, appetites, desires, ambitions, aspirations, longings, that make up the infinitely varied complex which we call "human nature," present their wide-open mouths to be filled from the store-house of the physical and social environment. And what this store-house provides is good or bad, pretty good or very bad, according to the standard by which you measure it. Good for the health, bad for the bank account; good for the desire of pleasure, bad for clarity of intellect or peace of conscience; good for the ambition to be wealthy or to gain political preferment, bad for the ambition to be scholarly or professionally useful; good for the aspirations and

longings to be famous or successful in artistic achievement, bad for the spiritual cultivation which demands resignation and humility; — such are a few of the conflicting terms which apply to the same experiences with the same things, when regarded from different points of view. But all these experiences are common to man as man; all grow inevitably out of the very complexity, not to say the disharmony, of human nature as set firmly in its inescapable natural and social environment. And all this variety is still further variegated, so to say, by the infinite variability of individuality, as this principle is applied to the highest of the animal species.

But what is the common element by which we classify things, and experiences of things, so greatly divergent, under one cover of the words: "It is good" (or, "It is bad")? From the inward point of view, we can think of no better word to designate this common element than the word *satisfaction*. That which takes place within the soul is its satisfaction,—of some kind or other and more or less lasting and complete. But never long lasting, and seldom or never quite complete. For what Rückert says so beautifully of the soul's ideal of its own better Self is true of every state and stage of the soul's movement, whether it be along the path of its moral progress, upward or downward.

> " 'Fore every soul an image stands, of what it ought to be;
> So long as it's not this, from unrest it's not free."

When we inquire what it is external to the Self, what it is in the thing, or in the mode of its physical action, or in the character of its appeal to our psychical or spiritual activities, which conduces to the feeling of satisfaction, we are equally at a loss to assign any definite quality, or group of qualities, that is sure of success in all individual instances. We seem doomed still to content ourselves with very indefinite and unscientific expressions. We can only say that, just as we call our experience of satisfaction something good *in* us (a state or condition of life which is subjectively good); so, that which conduces to the satisfaction (the instrument or creator activity of the state) is some form of the good *for* us. The satisfaction and the cause of the satisfaction, — one from the point of view of our own condition of feeling and the other from the point of view of the observer, or investigator, of the reason of the condition, — are both worthy to be called good. It is plain, however, that the point on which the mind dwells with a supreme interest, from whichever of these two points of view it is regarded, is *the soul's condition of satisfaction.*

In all our many dealings with physical objects and events, and with social relations and occurrences, the one thing which every man most surely knows — if, indeed, he is able to make up his mind in any way about the whole matter — is whether he actually has the feeling of satisfaction, whether in fact, he realizes the good in his own experience.

In such matters, every individual thinks — and with a large measure of reasonableness in the thought — that he is the best judge. Chemistry cannot tell him what combinations of atoms *must* produce fruits and sauces that are "good," because agreeable of a certainty to his peculiar tastes. If he does not, in fact, like onions or olives, he receives with a smile the advice of his friend that he *ought* to like them. He is rather more deferential toward the advice of his doctor as to how much and what, food or exercise, is good or bad for him. But here the point of view is totally changed. Both doctor and patient are considering the more probable means for securing the good of improved health, though this kind of good may have to be secured through the forfeiture of much pleasure in other kinds of good; and this to such an extent that the individual who does not make the improvement of health a matter of good conduct may wish that he had died the sooner, rather than endure the prolonged evils of doctoring himself.

We see, then, that this matter of determining what is *really good* (of getting the good and of being in the good state of satisfaction), is, unless we can arrive at some other measure of "goodness," an ever-shifting complexity, not to say an indistinguishable muddle. But there have been from the beginning (so far, indeed, as we know anything about beginnings), two ways of estimating goods, of "sorting them out," as the

phrase is, and of commending them to consumers in general in terms of their value when ranged along a scale. These "goods" have, to be sure, been quite differently labelled by those who have undertaken to fix a price upon them for their fellow men; and there have been, not infrequently, certain "mill-end sales" or "everything knocked-down-to-the-lowest-price auctions," in human history. Witness the extraordinary changes in recent times, of expert opinions as to the foods that are good for the health and as to the good ways of preparing them; as to the medicines and habits of exercise that are of curative value; as to the methods of doing business and conducting experimental science and of education that are good for the individual and for society; and also, perhaps we ought to say, chiefly, as to what is morally good or bad in matters of conduct.

Of the two ways of measuring the satisfactions in which the experience of what is good consists, one may be called the measure of quantity or intensity and the other the measure of intrinsic worth or value. We have said that these two ways of estimating the good have always existed; we repeat and specially emphasize the word "*always*," in spite of the efforts of ancient schools of ethics and of modern scientific theories of evolution, to the contrary.

As long as the standard of quantity is strictly maintained, there is no argument available to convince a man that he *ought to* prefer one kind

of good to another. The decision of the question as to which is the better of two forms of good remains dependent upon the answer to the other question: Which is in fact the greater of the two satisfactions? Or if we substitute the word pleasure, as the only conceivable kind of satisfaction, we seem forced to the conclusion: "Quantity of pleasure being equal, push-pin is as good as poetry." But it is doubtful if there is any intellectually and morally normal individual who finds satisfaction in such a motto as this, whether applied by others to himself or by himself to others. True is the saying of Carlyle on this subject: "In the meanest mortal there lies something nobler." And we can scarcely doubt that there have been men who could honestly say with Browning's Rabbi Ben Ezra:

> "Then welcome each rebuff
> That turns earth's smoothness rough,
> Each sting that bids nor sit nor stand but go!
> Be our joys three parts pain,
> Strive, and hold cheap the strain;
> Learn, nor account the pang; dare, never grudge the throe."

Thus far, however, we are only compelled to admit that some men are so constituted that the fight to overcome difficulties, the "throwing themselves all into the struggle," gives them a more intense and somehow larger quantity of satisfaction than the finding of things so smooth in their pathway as not to stimulate the spirit and the activities of a strenuous revolt.

We have already seen that the moral feelings connected with the message, "I ought" (or, "I ought not") are in themselves considered, or just as normal mental states, either feelings of attraction or feelings of repulsion. They have pleasures or pains connected with them; and they become attached to different deeds or species of conduct. | We have also anticipated, what will be shown more clearly in other connections, how it is that certain judgments and certain principled habits become devoted to these feelings; or — in rarer cases — involved in a sort of conflict with them. Now since conduct is the sphere within which we find that which is good and that which is bad from the moral point of view, in using these terms we seem to be appealing to a new kind of satisfaction. Good conduct, then, is that which gives satisfaction to moral consciousness, — either as feeling, or as judgment; or so far as is possible, both. Bad conduct is that which produces dissatisfaction from the moral point of view; or if we deny that any action which is properly called *conduct* can be neutral from the moral point of view, bad conduct is that which fails to give satisfaction when regarded from the moral point of view.

We have another pair of words which we apply with equal facility, and perhaps with even greater frequency, to the two classes of conduct, — that which produces satisfaction and that which does not. These are the words right and wrong.

These words are not so inward in their meaning, are not what the psychologists would call, so subjective. The figure of speech from which these words are derived is explained as the drawing of a line or the marking-out of a path along which the conduct of life should be directed. The conduct which follows this line is right; that which departs from this line is wrong. The person who keeps to the path is in the right; the person who steps out of this path has wandered from the right; he has entered upon and is pursuing the morally wrong way. Combining in the ordinary and appropriate fashion the two pairs of words, as they, respectively, emphasize the inward experience of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and the visible expressions to the forms of behavior which arouse the feeling of satisfaction and its opposite, we get some nearer glimpses of what it really means to secure the good things of the moral life. When classified, however crudely and imperfectly, this sort of "goods" may be described as the so-called virtues, or different forms of behavior that distinguish the virtuous, or morally good, man. Thus, conduct which displays the virtue of courage is received by the moral consciousness as one of the species of behavior that gives it satisfaction. The same thing is true of the virtue of wisdom, of the virtue of loyalty, of the virtue of justice, of the virtue of kindness; and so on through all the catalogue of the best recognized of the virtues.

But when the practical problem is faced,—especially if it be in any conspicuous and acute form,—of giving and receiving this kind of satisfaction (that afforded by the morally good), two species of conflict, of more or less painful doubt and difficulty, are quite sure, under the universal conditions of human life, sooner or later to arise. The first of these is the conflict between pleasure and the satisfaction which morally right conduct affords. The second is the puzzling contest between the claims of the virtues themselves. This contest of claims, to be virtuous in one way, and at the same time to be virtuous in quite another and for the time incompatible way, produces by no means infrequently a very painful hauling in opposite directions of the intention of the man who sincerely wishes to do the right thing, or, in other words, to be on this particular occasion satisfactorily good.

Pleasure is indisputably a form of the good which the sensitive constitution of man, as both animal and rational, compels him to receive with satisfaction. To be in a state of pleasurable emotion is, essentially considered, to be realizing one form of those experiences which we are bound to call good; but to suffer pain is, in itself considered, a bad experience for any sensitive creature. Even our most purely moral feelings cannot be separated from this "pleasure-pain" quality; it, indeed, seems to belong to nearly if

not quite all of our emotional experiences. The consciousness of having done what one ought is always, if taken by itself, a pleasant feeling; but all too frequently for our perfect happiness in trying to be good, the apprehension of the consequences, at hand or in the future, of what we have considered it our duty to do much more than equals, — indeed, often quite submerges, the pleasurable side of the moral satisfaction. This, however, is true of most of our experiences, whether regarded from the moral or from some other point of view; they are accompanied and followed by a mixture of both pleasurable and painful feelings.

There is no commoner experience all along the course of moral development than that of conflict between conduct which offers the greatest satisfaction in the form of pleasure and the conduct from which we expect only the habitually mild and often doubtful pleasure afforded by the satisfactions of an approving conscience. If under the term "happiness" we strive to hide only the more dignified and lasting forms of what is after all nothing nobler than the experience of pleasure, the fact remains unchanged. There is little more truth, in fact, in the injunction, "Be good, and you'll be happy," than in the cynical maxim which affirms that the conditions of the most perfect happiness are "good digestion and no conscience."

It has already been asserted that we must

measure the different forms of satisfaction by their quality, their standard along some scale of values, and not by their quantity or intensity alone. Were this not actually so, as a reality set firmly and irremovably into all human minds and hearts, and into all social relations and social institutions, no such thing as morality could be conceived; much less could any such thing as moral distinctions be given the estimate and influence which they certainly have somehow sustained.

> "What is most just is noblest, health is best,
> Pleasantest 'tis to get your heart's desire."

So ran the Delian inscription; and when quoting it Aristotle announces the conclusion: "Happiness is at once the best and noblest and pleasantest thing in the world, and these are not separated." But neither the oracle nor the philosopher intended to submit the nobility and ideal value of being a good man from the moral point of view to the standard of the pleasure which the good man himself, or any one else, was going to get out of it. Both oracle and philosopher distinguished sharply between what was noble in conduct and character and the pleasant life which came to the man who somehow succeeded in getting his "heart's desire." And the philosopher, when he comes to develop his views as to the doctrine of the virtues and the essentials of what has moral worth and gives the satisfaction which the morally worthy ought to command, everywhere clearly

enough shows that by "happiness" he means that best of all fortunes which we call "good." It is the state in which man resembles the Divine Being, the quite satisfactory condition in which the individual may place himself, but only can place himself, by becoming nobly "good."

But it is not in terms of oracular mysticism or of philosophical technique that human nature gives its most decisive testimony to the higher, if not to the supreme value of the satisfaction, and of the conduct affording this satisfaction, that belongs most definitely if not exclusively, to the moral sphere. All human history and all the institutions developed by man during the countless eras of his history confirm the truth of what we have elsewhere said ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 41) in the following words: "It is a fundamental and indisputable fact that men estimate the different conscious states of the Self as differing in value according to a standard which is not merely quantitative. In other words, *goods differ, as estimated in human consciousness, not only in degrees, but also in excellence or worth.* That there *are* kinds of goods which have different — higher and lower — values is thus an opinion common alike to the multitude and to all the reflective thinkers of mankind. This opinion is but the expression of that preference for certain states of consciousness over other states, irrespective of their relations as regards quantity of the same kind, which belongs to all the artistic and

ethical development of humanity. It is in the effort to account for this preference, to give it validity, to defend it against attacks, and to judge ourselves and others in the light of this radiance, that the problems of ethics divide men into different opinions and different schools. For a science of ethics only begins when it is seen that men's actions are consciously directed toward, or unconsciously terminate in, some one of the several forms of the 'good' (or its opposite): and then the effort is made to give a rational unity to all these forms, and to regard the accepted rules of conduct as the different ways in which, as men believe, these forms may be obtained."

From the practical point of view which dominates all our procedure, we do not think it right just now to argue the universal statement that has just been made, by adducing in its proof the facts of past history and of present observation so amply justifying it. We derive from it at once, however, this most valuable of all the rules for giving to the individual inquirer, *What ought I to do?* a partial answer. You ought to establish in your mind an adequate estimate of the value of the morally good, the worth of that sometimes passionately eager and absorbing, but more often mild, and sometimes even largely painful satisfaction, which the morally healthy consciousness accords to conduct that is "good," and to the character of the "good" man. Stir up

imagination to depict the worth of moral goodness. No one can do what he ought to do; no one can even know what he ought to do; unless he achieves and maintains a covetous and admiring attitude toward the morally good. One may fail in becoming rich or famous or learned, who admires and covets wealth or fame or knowledge; and one may gain wealth by inheritance, and have learning and fame almost unwillingly thrust upon one. But with moral goodness, the case is not the same. To share in this good one must estimate it as having great worth; to find this treasure, one must seek it as a treasure of the rarest value. One must be ambitious to realize this good in the conduct of one's life.

The immediate and practical answer to the question, What then ought I to do? is so far forth plain: I ought to commit myself intelligently and whole-heartedly to the kind of conduct, to the attainment of that measure of personal being, which gives the satisfaction of being worth whatever it may cost. And this worth is not to be estimated because the doing of the good thing, or the being a good person, is instrumental somehow — however surely — to the securing of more of a less noble and worthy form of good. This good is itself to be estimated by me, as it has always virtually been estimated by the race, as a good having the greatest intrinsic worth. To such a height did the ancient Stoic philosophy raise its estimate of the value of the morally good

as to say: "God is beneficial. Good is also beneficial. It should seem, then, that where the essence of God is, there too is the essence of good." And to every man: "You are a distinct part of the essence of God, and contain a certain part of him in yourself."

But the highest possible estimate of the value of doing the morally right deed, of the practice of this or that virtue, or even of the habitual practice of all the virtues, *as mere estimate*, surely cannot be held fully to answer the question, What ought I to do? The intention must be fixed on getting this good. And in saying this word we introduce a topic which has given rise to no little controversy. Is the main, the decisive thing in doing the good deed, or in being quite good, to be located in the intention? Do we do all that we ought when we intend what is morally right? Is the *intention* to be good identical with the really and truly *being* good?

In the discussions awakened by these questions, and in the practical answers given to them, we come upon one of those many cases where the careless use of words, and the sad lack of clear thinking, are followed by most mischievous results. On the one hand, are we not assured even by the stringency of biblical writers that the bad "heart" makes all the difference; and by a long line of moralists that it is the "motive," or — better still — the "intention," which distinguishes between the right and the wrong of

conduct, the good man and the bad man? And what excuse is more common with the moral blunderer than that he meant no harm? Or, for him by his friends, than this: He meant well; he's a fellow of the best intentions?

On the other hand, are we to forget that the obligation to make good use of his reason lies on every rational being; that one has no right not to think; and that wisdom in planning and courage and decision in carrying out one's plans are among the most important of the virtues? The coward and the fool, in spite of no end of good intentions and kindly motives, are full apt, if not full fain, to make a moral mess of it, when the moment for action has arrived. And are we wholly to overlook the truth contained in the cynical saying: "Hell is paved with good intentions"?

But what more can a man do with the moral question than always to estimate at the highest its importance and always intend to give to it the right practical answer? The dilemma, into which such a proposal of the moral problem would not only temporarily throw but finally leave us, can be answered only when we turn our minds back to recall what we have already discovered to be true with respect to the import of this problem. The moral problem has to do with the person and with the whole person; it concerns personal relations, in all manner of personal relations. Unless by right motive, or good intention, we mean to include an attitude assumed and stead-

fastly maintained by the entire personal life toward the message of "the ought," we cannot find in either word (motive or intention) the quite satisfactory answer to the question, What ought I to do? Aristotle saw this more clearly than most theologians or psychologists have seen it since Aristotle's day. For he said: "If the purpose is to be all that it should be, both the calculation or the reasoning must be true, and the desire must be right." It is only, then, when "good intention" includes the whole moral Self in its intelligent and persistent efforts to realize in life the moral ideal, that good intention can properly be held also to include the essence of the morality which belongs to all the virtues, the priceless treasure of the secret, how to be a really good man.

But there are two considerations which afford no little relief to the burden which the candidate for a title to the perfection of virtue may feel, from finding that the standard for his self-examination, and for his esteem by the moral sages and authorities among his fellows, is placed so unattainably high. The forming of good intentions is often the best possible exercise of virtue; sometimes it is the only way of virtue possible under the circumstances. In such circumstances, the *will-full* fixing of the mind on the idea of virtue, while lying in wait for the chance to realize it, is the very best thing which the good man can contrive to do. These virtues of deliberate and rather cool intention may be called

"the Puritanic virtues." The man, however, who has only these virtues, or who has them predominatingly, is not apt to be esteemed as a morally lovely man. And this is precisely as it should be. For there are certain forms of feeling which by their very spontaneity seem to gain much in moral beauty. Such are the feelings of kindliness, hospitality, generosity, and much of courage and self-control. Righteous anger, and out-flaming hatred of injustice, are not wanting in their title to similar virtuousness, though in a somewhat different way.

It seems, then, that the virtue of habitually intending well is a kind of deliberative and voluntary wisdom; and that this virtue properly emphasizes the duty of man to plan his conduct, wherever this is possible, so as to put his moral reason and right resolve into appropriate action, when the time for action comes.

But "being good" is a conception of a life much more complex and difficult of attainment than that which comprises the more or less successful practice of any one or two of the virtues in any one or two of the various classes of relations in which the social environment estimates the moral worth of the individual man. There are few or none so morally wretched and ill-formed, whether by nature or by evil habits, that they have nothing of any of the virtues! Indeed, there are not many who do not secretly cherish a bit of most, if not of all, of them. But to be, as the phrase

is, "all-around good," is something more than to be conspicuous for courage, or for wisdom, or for probity, or for kindness, or for whatever other particular virtue you choose to name. Nor is it the same thing as to be a good father, a good son, or a good brother, a good teacher, lawyer, doctor, or what not, or even a good citizen, — using the word good always in its ethical significance.

The truly good man exhibits a kind of symmetry in the virtues, a proportion of a rational and ideal sort in the various types of good conduct, which is lacking to those who are good in one or two directions only. Indeed, the disproportionate or exaggerated display of many of the so-called virtues seems nearly or quite to deprive them of their virtuous character. And here is where the goodness of the moral type, or that in conduct and character which has intrinsic worth from the point of view of the seeker after moral good, combines with the good worth of truth and the good worth of beauty. The value of truth is not, indeed, to be wholly measured by the foundations which it establishes for moral excellence and for a social order that is righteous in constitution and behavior; but not to regard this value as worthy to define opinion and direct conduct, — this is to be immoral in a most destructive way. Every trace of shamming or pretence, every shadow or suspicion of the untrue, the unreal, in conduct and in character, puts a blot on the realization of the intention *to be good.*

Being good is also being beautiful, — as a person, judged by the harmonies and æsthetical qualities of conduct and of character. The good of beauty is not the same precisely as the good of morality. Each has its own intrinsic type of value. But some of the virtues excite æsthetical feeling and approving judgment in the form of sublimity; others, rather, in the form of harmony; still others, in the form of that which men call "handsome."

Being good, then, in the noblest form of the conception covered by these words, implies a sort of realization in the concrete and individual shape of personality, of all these three kinds of that which has intrinsic worth. How this can be, invites our quest for the answer to the question *What ought I to do?* out into the wider fields of life and of reality. Until he has entered into these fields, it will probably remain true of the most earnest questioner, —

> "That type of Perfect in his mind
> In nature can he nowhere find,
> He sows himself on every wind."

But at least we may quote Epictetus once more. "Shall I show you the muscular training of a philosopher (a truly good man)?"

"What muscles are those?"

"A will undisappointed, evils avoided, powers duly exercised, careful resolutions, unerring decisions (*sic*). These you shall see."

CHAPTER IV

ON DOING ONE'S DUTY

THE notion of Duty as covering the sphere of conduct from the moral point of view, in any broad and comprehensive way, is a product of modern social development and modern reflective thinking. Its essential meaning, as involved in its very derivation and as consecrated and preserved by long usage, involves these two factors: (1) an obligation or debt; and (2) some particular person to whom the obligation is directed, to whom the debt is owing. Putting the two together we may say that *a duty* is a piece of conduct, or an habitual way of behaving, toward some person as his *due*. But as long as the essential qualities of conduct — that which makes it to be right or wrong, good or bad — depend upon differences regarded as equally essential between different persons, classes of persons, and relations of persons, there can, of course, be no one principle which rules over all. There can only be duties; there can be no one duty, no universal principle of duty-doing, — for example, to treat all men with equal justice, kindness, benevolence, brotherly love, or what not.

All over the ancient world, and scarcely less down to and into the modern world, wherever the principles of Christian brotherhood have not effectively penetrated, sharp distinctions in the duties, but no established and principled notions and practices of doing duty according to some unchanging law or ideal, have maintained themselves. How this has been, in fact, let us quote from the book ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 369) already several times referred to, in order to show: "Where the relations which define the different classes and different circumstances of mankind are sufficiently permanent, we find arising out of them some specific formulas that prescribe the corresponding duties. For example, the relations of the family bear upon the consciences of the different members of the family in different ways. Husbands and wives owe each other some duties; but between the chief of the tribe and the other tribesmen, or between the common members of the same tribe, other duties are owing. In the narratives of the Homeric era we have a picture of a variety of obligations under which gods and men stand to each other, and all to Zeus; while the different classes of persons among the allied Greek forces acknowledge peculiar duties as belonging to each one of them; nor are even Greeks and Trojans so alien that no duties whatever are felt to be incumbent upon both in their reciprocal relations. In our modern commercial civilization it is the

duties of men and women that grow out of their various economic relations which are chiefly emphasized; and even domestic, social, and religious duties are either relegated to the background of privacy or else are themselves discharged as matters of contract and of commercial justice. Indeed, there seems to be danger that in England, America, and Germany all human duties will be regarded from the commercial point of view, — while in the Orient, and especially perhaps with the Hindū and the Muhammadan, *duties* have chiefly to do with religious and social relations; while commerce and trade are matters that are conducted with an appalling lack of any consciousness of being bound by the sentiment of duty or the principles of the moral law."

During the centuries preceding our own, the relations of the classes, and of the different individuals within those classes, had become so well defined in the civilizations of Europe and this country, as to make the path of the man who wished to perform faithfully all his duties tolerably clear. But these relations themselves had been shaped, and in turn dominated, by conflicting and even by morally opposite forces. On the one hand, there was the sentiment of honor arising from the spirit of chivalry, and the feeling of kindness due to the Christian idea of brotherhood, under which the relations of the many weaker and the few strong ones were rather strictly prescribed. On the other hand, there

remained the powerful sinister, sensual, and purely commercial motives, which have always infected all human relations. These too often dominated or corrupted the finer sentiments; and they not infrequently introduced confusions into the old-time questions, and additional puzzles in the form of new questions, for the truly conscientious mind. In this dual way modern society attained in the Occident a kind of solidarity which, while it expressed much that was morally good, also covered much that was morally evil, in its doctrine and practice touching the duties owing from every individual man to his fellow man.

Of late, however, a fearful rumor and an increasingly sure prospect of radical changes in the essentials of social organization — domestic, economic, political, and indeed most thorough in every chief kind of human relations—must be faced by the modern world. The causes that are effecting these changes are powerful and manifold. What may be called, though in a somewhat vague and indefinite way, "the rising of the democracy," with its diminished estimate of the social importance and moral value of distinctions of class, rank, or official position, has already greatly upset the popular notions as to the duties that are *owing* on account of these distinctions. The discoveries of the modern sciences and the added mastery over the earth's material resources have vastly changed the eco-

nomic relations of the classes. The alterations of opinion on matters of moral and religious import, and the decay of faith in certain moral and religious ideals, have accelerated this process of change. The evils of the time-honored social customs, such as economic advantages afforded to the morally undeserving, the wrongs inflicted on children, women, and on the poor and defenceless, and the more hideous evils of vice, which have been exploited by the press, and given to millions of readers in the forms of novel and drama, make a loud call upon all good people to attempt their repression, if their complete overthrow be impossible. Athwart the plain path of daily duty-doing is thrown the alarming spectre of one big and solemn duty,— no less than to change the whole system which has hitherto made this path seem so plain and secure. But duties depend on relations. Duties must therefore change as relations change. The changes in relations that are already half effected are important and numerous. The changes proposed for the near future are almost unlimited. "Good people all" are summoned to take active part in effecting these changes. Both the call and the prospect contribute toward making the problem of duty increasingly complicated.

Especially conspicuous and alarming is the upsetting of the established code of specific duties as pertaining to the relations of the sexes in the life of the family. To make one anxious on this

point, it is not necessary to hold any special theory of the nature and origin of the marriage tie, or of the resulting family life. One may espouse the ideal of the Republic of Plato or of the most extreme of the modern Socialists and so-called "Feminists"; of the primitive man in Australia and the Andaman Islands; of the Mormons, or of the early Christian and present Roman Catholic Church; in no case can the awful pregnancy of this upbreaking of the marital code of duties for the future social and moral condition of the nations be minimized or overlooked.

Something similar might be said with respect to the changes which are so rapidly taking place concerning the notions of what is due, from the moral point of view, as growing out of all manner of political and economic relations. Can the subject owe service to a Government in which he has no rights equal to those of the most favored of its subjects? Are we to render tribute to Cæsar, just because he is Cæsar, although he is not our choice as Cæsar? Does the employer owe, above the promised wages, a share in the profits to those whom he has employed? And if the workman shares in the profits, is it not his duty to "stand for" his share in the losses of this kind of partnership? Is it the duty of the citizen to pay duties — his moral duty to submit to the customs-collector — to a Government that is violating its duty to all the citizens by favoring certain classes of its citizens? And so on and

so on *ad indefinitum;* for we can scarcely expect to arrive at the end of this chapter.

It appears, then, that there is no discharge from this war, — the conflict of the duties owed, the debit of conduct under which we find ourselves on account of the complexity of the relations in which we are forced to stand toward our fellow men; and that the more the established code of such duties is made a matter of rational investigation and of the attempts of various interests for its improvement, the more sharp and perplexing this conflict is destined, from the very nature of the case, to become. At the present moment, for the man who really intends to be good, the finding out of his particular duties toward specific classes of his fellows in the social system seems complicated as never before. Society itself is more than ever complicated; and its old-fashioned constitution is rapidly being broken up.

Concrete duties, or the ways of behavior which one person is indebted to accord to another, must always differ in dependence upon unavoidable differences in relations. Abolish all family life as at present constituted, and the duties of male and female in the pairing cannot possibly be precisely the same; nor can the morally right forms of behavior of the begetter to the begotten, or of the bearer of the offspring to the offspring borne, be reduced to a visible, external identity. If there is to be any form of government main-

tained, even the loosest and most extreme conceivable democracy, those who govern and those who are governed must "pay attention" to each other; and so must all the different departments of the Government, in the performance of their allotted duties as well as in the exercise of their prescribed rights. Suppose that we in imagination throw all social, political, and other forms of organized relations to one side, and just conceive of every man, unbidden and unguided by law or custom, doing for the moment what seems matter of duty in his own eyes. Suppose that we abolish all respect for particular persons, and all rules of duty-doing as based on particular personal relations, by an abstract respect for personality as such. The case of the really good man, of the soul which devoutly wished to do its whole duty to every other soul, would become the most distracting of all, the one most surely to have its right solution abandoned in despair. The better the man, the more miserably uncertain would he be as to the infinite variety of duties owing to such an infinite variety of unadjudicated cases.

Our theoretical dubitation as well as practical perplexity are not diminished when we try to make up our minds upon questions of duty-doing in general by a process of independent induction simply. And there are unsurmountable obstacles in the way when we propose to give to our induction an experimental turn. There is no inductive or experimental science of the various duties.

If we turn to those who have appealed to the gods as the trustworthy lawgivers of the prescriptions for duty in extended and concrete form, we can scarcely fail to observe the truth of what Emerson sang:

> "For gods delight in gods,
> And thrust the weak aside."

Nor is it the Fijians alone among whom murder, cannibalism, and treachery are sanctioned by the gods. On the other hand, the list of virtues recommended by the Brāhmanas differs very little from that of the Decalogue. And according to PISTIS SOPHIA the Christian who has been initiated into the mysteries discoursed about by Jesus with Mary Magdalene: "Though he be a man in the world, yet is he higher than all gods, and shall be exalted among them all." And then there are the teachings of Buddha announcing —

> "Within the Doctrine's pale, that rule of conduct
> Outside of which no genuine monk existeth."

If we resort with our questioning about our duties to the highest of all authorities we find him of all teachers about the least regardful of the "debts" which social conventions had laid upon men's shoulders, especially in the form of religious observances, but emphasizing the joyful spirit of service, the living soul of all duty-doing, as sons of God in all relations with our brothers among men. But this only throws us back on somebody's judgment (if not always or, indeed,

in any case completely and independently our own) as to the particular deeds and habits of action that are to be picked out, as the phrase is, from the miscellaneous, — the "job lot" it often seems, of the duties proper to the different particular relations.

Are we forced, then, simply to point to the spirit of duty as itself a comprehensive way of duty-doing, while left to enlightened moral judgment to decide upon the concrete forms in which this spirit must find its adequate expression? On the one hand, there is the dependence of society at large, and of all kinds of social constitutions and social intercourse, on the character of the relations entered into by the individuals comprising it. On the other hand, there is the fact of the dependence of our duties on the existing character of the different relations, into which we are forced or which we undertake voluntarily, and upon the changes which are constantly taking place in these relations. How complex and shifting does the situation make the grounds of moral judgment and choice!

Thus far it would appear that the only answer applicable to all persons who are honestly inquiring as to their duties resolves itself into these two exhortations: Possess yourself of, and cherish, the spirit of duty; and, Cultivate the power of correctly (from the moral point of view) making up the mind as to what is the particular duty under such or such circumstances. This will be

doing one's *duty*, while at the same time — it is likely — being frequently perplexed to know, and even unable after reflection to decide, what one's *duties* are. The good man may commit many mistakes about his duties while doing his whole duty. But he will not commit these mistakes voluntarily, or through immoral carelessness.

It seems, then, that this question, like the question which was raised in the last Chapter, is no sooner placed close to the skull or to the breast than it begins to strike powerfully inward. This is, indeed, the essential quality of all moral problems. From the point of obligation simply, or chiefly, they are puzzles for the brain and burdens on the heart. Their essential appeal is to the spirit that is in man. How do the thoughts expand and the heart glow, of the intending good man, the soul of him who really and earnestly wishes to do all his duties, as he reads that sublime passage from the treatise on "The Pure Practical Reason" of Immanuel Kant. "*Duty!* thou sublime and mighty name that dost embrace nothing charming or insinuating, but requirest submission, and yet seekest not to move the will by threatening aught that would arouse natural aversion or terror, but merely holdest forth a law which of itself finds entrance into the mind and yet gains reluctant reverence (though not always obedience), a law before which all inclinations are dumb even though they secretly counter-

work it; what origin is there worthy of thee, and where is to be found the root of thy noble descent which proudly rejects all kindred with the inclinations; a root to be derived from which is the indispensable condition of the only worth which men can give themselves?"

But now again let the intending good man — thoughts expanded, heart aglow, and will more than ever bent on doing his very best — turn away from this noble exordium to Duty and to the spirit of duty-doing, and ask himself this question: "What of precise directions or strictly available information have I obtained in my present extreme doubt as to what *is* the proper solution of my to-day's pressing moral problem?" What is my duty to my delinquent debtor or my urgent creditor; to the solicitor for a subscription to a society about whose aims and methods I am still in doubt, or to this particular beggar on the street who seems to me an exception to my general rule for dealing with this class of solicitors; to the friend who wants help in the enterprise which I fear will not turn out for his good; to the member of my family who craves indulgence for doing, or for having done, what I cannot heartily approve; or to my country which demands my support in a matter in which I am sure it is plainly in the wrong? To the man who asks himself, Is it *X* or *Y* or perhaps *Z* that will solve my problem as to the proper values of *A*, *B*, *C*, and *D*? — such formulas as that of Kant afford

no definite answer. They are not to be — or if they are meant to be, still they are not — instruments of precision. We do not go to them for information as to this or that particular duty. We do go to them for maintaining a high sense of the value of duty-doing, and for the quickening of our drooping and jaded spirit of devotion to the ideal of moral life.

The man who asks himself, What ought I to do? — meaning by this, Just precisely what is my duty toward this person, or this cause representing personal welfare, under such particular circumstances? — is not left, however, perpetually unprepared for meeting unpredictable new combinations of complicated circumstances. He may fix in his mind certain very helpful general principles, and may train himself in certain very useful habits of disposition and of action. To get his point of standing for these achievements he falls back upon the essential nature of all conduct regarded as a moral affair. As regarded from this point of view, whatever one decides upon as *one's duty* must be done in the spirit of respect for the interests and the values of personal life. In other words, all one's conduct from the moral point of view is the dealing of oneself, a person, with others who are persons. The good man cannot treat himself, or others of his kind, as though either he or they were less than persons, were tools or things. The values of both can never be reduced to those of a *merely* instrumental

sort. Good for this or good for that, both he and they *may be* or *may not be;* possible material for good men, — this is something which they *must be*, as men, each in all the others' sight.

Nothing is more evident to the observer of the present conditions regulating the conceptions and practices of men respecting their duties toward one another, than the fact that the larger proportion of all the crimes and immoralities, which bring so much distress and degradation to individuals and so much loss and shame to society, arise from the gross and almost universal violation of the essential spirit of Duty and the fundamental principle of all duty-doing. Men treat themselves and others as less than persons, as tools or things. Tools all men are; since they serve some purpose in shaping the structure of society, in making its foundations sound or rotten, its superstructure comfortable or miserable, and æsthetically ugly or fair. Things, too, all men are; for they have material bodies, physical needs, and moral and artistic aptitudes which can be realized only through their thing-like activities and relations to other things. But *mere* things, human beings never are; and the most important guide to the concrete solution of the problem of the duties growing out of this complex nature of humanity in its manifold relations is the effective memory of this truth: It is duty always to treat the other "fellow," yourself a person, with the respect due to his

share in the same inestimable values, and possibilities for development, of a personal life.

Further help is gained in deciding the problem in the variability of duties by following along the same line. There are certain forms of feeling — or, perhaps, it would be more fitting to say, certain "dispositions" — to which all men are entitled from one another, and which it is every man's duty to give to every other, when opportunity for the satisfaction of the right by gift of the duty happens to arise. How far they can all be summed up in any one form of disposition, however deeply principled it may be, we shall consider more profitably at another time. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another," is a good available moral maxim, or not, according to the interpretation given to the word "owe" and the word "love." Even if we adopt the maxim for our own, after having hit upon a quite satisfactory interpretation, we have the many problems touching the varied duties, in which this love should display itself, still remaining on our minds and hands.

There are, however, certain *dispositions*, or particular habits of feeling, with their tendency to express themselves in conduct, which the developed moral consciousness of the race, — largely, if not chiefly, under the persuasive influences of religion, — has come to think are due to all persons. I say "the developed moral consciousness of the race," meaning by this, the

rather, the principles and practice advocated by the good few, and secretly, even sneakingly, accepted as good for others toward them, if not for themselves toward others, by the popular majority. These "dispositions" may be enumerated as justice, courage, loyalty, honesty, and a certain measure of kindness, fairness, and such like virtues. They are due in our conduct toward all men, even if they do not belong to our countrymen, our set of associates, our class. Such dispositions are virtuous forms of feeling. How shall they be transformed into virtuous deeds?

Now it cannot be doubted that if all these dispositions into which the respect for personality may be divided, or into which as into channels it may be let flow from the heart of the good man upon the broader fields of humanity, have their voices listened to, they tell us much as to the direction following which the right outlet in duty-doing is to be found. For they say invariably, "Be just, be honest, be loyal, be fair, be kind, with whomsoever you are to deal; one or more of these dispositions is always your duty as owing to all men." And surely it would often be no small help toward deciding the problem of one's particular doings in the so-called "line of duty," to listen to one or another of these voices which speak from the heart of a person morally well-disposed. Indeed, there can be little doubt that if every one habitually gave heed to their advice, there would soon be left few or none of

the most puzzling problems over what is *the* duty to be, under the circumstances, best done.

But no cultivation of respect for personal values, or of the spirit of devotion to duty, however helped out by the habitual indulgence of the approved moral dispositions, taking men in the large as they are situated and constituted, can do away with the stern necessity for thinking out a certain doctrine of the duties, and for acquiring by practice the rapid and sure intuition of the right one to select, the particular duty, so to say, that fits precisely the ever-shifting relations and circumstances.

Writers on morals have made several notable efforts to help the construction of such a doctrine by classifying the duties along broad general lines; but some of this work has hindered rather than furthered the end toward which it has been directed. This is the case, for example, with the threefold classification into duties to Self, duties to others, and duties to God (or as polytheistically expressed, "to the gods"; pantheistically expressed, "to the Universe"). But duties to Self cannot be done, or even considered, except as deeds and habits of conduct which involve others; and duties to others have no meaning or force, except in connection with what we owe ourselves as obligated by moral consciousness and having respect for our own moral being as one person among many persons. The extremest duty of *self*-sacrifice is a duty at all, only as it has

reference to the welfare of others; and no conception of the welfare of others can lay upon us the obligation to sacrifice our truest and highest and most valuable Self. Especially infelicitous is the classification, apart, of religious duties. If there are any duties that are due to God, then all duties are equally due to him. For the believer in the Divine Being as the fountain of all law and doctrine regarding the doing of duty, there is only this comprehensive principle of classification: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth Jehovah require of thee; but to do justly, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with thy God?" But he who has not this belief may still hold that, though —

> "Life is mostly froth and bubble,
> Two things stand like stone —
> Kindness in another's trouble,
> Courage in your own."

The realities of life, however, have done far more for the successful solution of concrete problems of duty than have the abstract classifications and the debates in casuistry of the moralists. This service they have rendered, and perpetually continue to render, in two principal directions. They establish the relations of the persons forming society in the large, in groups that depend for their grouping on relatively important and permanent economic, physical, and psychical conditions. They also develop within these groups customary ways of behavior

between individual members of the group, which, although they may cover up much pretence and even shelter no little vice, do on the whole serve tolerably well for regulating the expression of those right moral dispositions to which reference was just made. Thus by the Will of the World (the will of God as immanent in man's physical and social evolution) and by the collective will of previous generations of men, as the latter has expressed itself in customs, laws, and the prevalent social opinions, the really "good will" of the truly dutiful person is led the more smoothly along in the path of his daily duty-doing. Each of these forms of service which the well-disposed person derives from his social grouping and social environment needs some further explanation and illustrating.

There are some of the economic and physical relations, within which the individual is set and which limit the character and scope of by far the greater part of his daily duties, that are never easily, and perhaps never at all, to be essentially changed. Amongst these the natural relations in which the two sexes stand to each other, and upon which some form of association resembling the family must be based, is the simplest and the most ready to hand for purposes of illustration. The relations of one man and one woman in the begetting and bearing of one or more children, and the relations of the offspring during the period of infancy, youth, and adolescence, to the

adult members of the same (shall we say, "domestic"?) group, are fixed by physical conditions. So long, then, as they remain to be considered at all from the moral point of view, the character of the dispositions which must be put into the duties of those persons who are, as a matter of actual fact, in these relations, is fixed by the same conditions. It is not the terms of the marriage ceremony as they are constituted by the customs of the Christian churches, or as they are made necessary by the civil law, that inaugurate or authorize these moral dispositions and the duties which grow out of them. It is not the divorce court, whether its findings meet ecclesiastical approbation and secure priestly sanction, or not, that has the right or the power to lessen or to abrogate these moral dispositions, as they apply to these matter-of-fact relations, and as they find expression in the duties appropriate to the relations.

The fundamental question of duty cannot be dodged, cannot be obscured or evaded. Is the sexual relation a moral affair? Is it a species of conduct that incurs obligation, demands right disposition, and must conform to moral ideals? On the one hand, we are now being told that this sexual relation ought never to be entered into except on the basis of a certain kind of love; on the other hand, we are being exhorted to believe that when this particular kind of love, which is not under the control of the individual, and is

not a moral affair, cools or ceases between the married pair, and arises and grows warm between one of this pair and some one else, it is fitting time to end the whole relation. Why, then, should there be vows involving any disposition of a moral sort peculiar to the relation? And what wonder that to the conservative majority this seems like a proposal to take the whole relation out of the question of duty-doing, out of the sphere of morality?

The various economic relations, such as those of partnership, employer and employed, seller and purchaser, trustee and stock-holder, serve to group men together in other more or less permanent relations that demand and afford scope for the expression of certain moral dispositions in appropriate forms of the doing of duties. If the most extreme Communism came to prevail for the complete reorganization of all the forms in which at present these relations constitute themselves, the moral dispositions that *ought to* control the daily duties of the individuals who are in the relations would remain unchanged. These dispositions — or, at least, the ones which most need to be emphasized — are not precisely the same as those that are chiefly consecrated by the family life. It is not the duty of the partner to give the same tender, solicitous, and protecting affection to his business partner that is due to the partner of his life, the wife and the mother of his children. Nor would time and strength suffice

for the employer of a thousand girls and boys to bestow upon each one the same discipline and affectionate care which he is in duty bound to bestow upon his own sons and daughters. On the other hand, he cannot absolve himself from the duty of giving special attention, with the appropriate moral disposition, to the interests of *his* partner, and of *his* customers or employees. Thus his business morality is defined and, as it were, ensphered, in the circle of economic relations which are peculiarly his own.

In essentially the same way must we consider the duties of the good man toward *his own* town, or *his own* kin, or *his own* country. To accept the particular groups of relationship into which one's own choice, or certain circumstances beyond one's control, have thrown him, as a sort of Providential definition of one's duties, a partial limitation of one's doubts and anxieties over the question, Just what is my duty here and now? is the safe and wise, and so the dutiful course, for one who wishes to plan his life aright from the moral point of view.

Within each of these groupings of men under varied relations a certain regulation of conduct by way of law, or custom enforced by public opinion, has already taken place. The attitude of the individual toward this outside pressure, as that of an atmosphere above, around, and below, must inevitably determine both his notions and his practice touching the doing of the duties

of the daily life. What ought this attitude to be? We have no hesitation in saying that, in the main, it ought to be one of acceptance and of adaptation. Or, the rather, let us say that the really good man, the man inspired sufficiently and guided wisely by the lofty spirit of Duty, will find it by no means impossible not only to adapt, but to make serviceable to this spirit, far the greater part of the laws and the customs which constitute his civil and social environment. Laws and customs are meant to compel those who have not this spirit to set certain bounds to the exhibition of their essential immorality. They may afford the good man a fairly available, though inadequate system of expression for this spirit. The morally right attitude toward custom is not one of subservience; but neither is it one of revolt.

Let any one analyze the laws and the customs which it is prescribed that every one shall observe who wishes a reputation for correct behavior in the community of which he is a member. Let him look at them, not in the ideality which at first blush they assume; but, the rather, as they really are when we consider the motives out of which they arose, and the actual way in which they are regarded and observed by many, perhaps by a majority of the community. How low the intelligence and the morality of the men who made the laws! How corrupt the officials whose express duty it is to enforce them! How hypo-

critical are the pleas of the lawyers, and how disappointing to the sense of essential equity the decisions of the judges in our "courts of justice" so-called! And with what impunity do the rich, and the clever rascals, however poor, succeed in evading the laws, or in escaping the penalty for breaking them! Who can doubt that much of such bitter reflections as these are supported by the facts?

Essentially the same bitter reflections may quite readily follow an analysis of the prevailing customs. For how much of essential immorality are the most cherished conventions of society made a cover or even a vehicle! What vicious dispositions find their most painful and destructive means of expression through the relations ordained by custom for the marriage state! How lacking in the old-fashioned honor are the most ordinary transactions of the present-day business life! How are the successful financiers, in spite of the horrible immorality of their methods, praised from the pulpit and endowed with honorable titles by the Government and the University! Indeed, how thoroughly insincere is much of that very social intercourse which custom has prescribed for the expression of the kindlier of the social sentiments!

With similar reflections to these are a great and a growing number fortifying themselves and arranging the forces of argument, the vote, and even of physieal violence, for the correction of

such shocking immoralities. Softly, a moment, however. Suppose that all men agree to put the right moral dispositions into the keeping of the laws and the customs, what would become of the greater part of these conventional evils and immoralities? Suppose, on the other hand, that we keep the bad dispositions, and totally change the laws and the customs. Doubtless it is possible to make the conventional marriage tie the cover and the cause of immense suffering and even wrong-doing. But put the right disposition into it, and what would become of the greater part of these evils? What would become of much of the suffering, and of no small part of the wrong-doing, if the "innocent" party were to do its whole duty of being thoroughly well-disposed toward the "guilty" one? On the other hand, tear up the old order, with its absurd conventionalities, and "go in" for freer love and less strictly limited divorce; will there be less suffering and wrong-doing accompanying the sexual relation, — the moral dispositions of men and women remaining unchanged?

A similar line of continued reflection may well enough serve to mitigate our complaints regarding the present ineptness of the appeal to law and to social custom for the definition of every doubter's question: What now is precisely my duty under the present solicitations or discouragements? It may even turn the mind in the opposite direction. For surely it is easier for both

workman and employer to determine their duties toward each other when things are running in the "regular way," than when either a strike or a lockout is contemplated or already declared. Surely it is easier for the husband or wife, who believes true the current formulas for the sanctity of the marriage bond, to work out a scheme of duty-doing, than it would be for the same persons, with the same good intentions, were everything left to current caprice or temporary convictions or emotions. Surely it is much simpler to calculate one's duty in a time of domestic peace than in a time of rebellion or revolution. To know one's duty toward one's country is much less complicated in Great Britain or in the United States than in China or Mexico.

For the person inspired and guided by the Spirit of Duty, under existing political organizations, economic arrangements, systems of legislation, and opinions and customs prevalent in conventionalized society, the choice between the conflicting claims of his daily duties is, indeed, often difficult enough. At times, such a choice is insistent and compulsory, but cannot be made with any confidence that it is made exactly right. But let prevail anarchism, or socialism, or feminism, or any of the other "isms," which propose the destruction or sudden upsetting of the existing order, and would such a choice be made any less difficult, or apt to become disastrous to the moral welfare of the individual or of society? Certainly

not. For the main guides to the concrete duties of prudence, wisdom, justice, and kindness would be indefinitely further removed.

Among the many discussions which have occupied those interested in the analysis of this right-honorable conception of duty, although some are of scanty practical importance, there are two which deserve in this connection a single remark. Is the merit of doing duty increased or lessened by its "going against the grain," by the amount of disinclination which its doing overcomes? Which is the more virtuous, the man who wants to get drunk but does not, or the man who does not drink because he does not want to; the man who gives in spite of his tendency to avarice, or the man who gives because he enjoys giving? To all such questions the answer is Yes, or No, — according to the point of view and the particular character of the virtue the answer designs to emphasize. In doing the same duty from the external point of view, one man may be exercising more self-control in the momentary triumph over appetite or desire, and the other may better deserve to be credited with the habit of prudence or of kindly generosity. Nor can we fail to notice that there are some duties such that an important part of the virtuousness of doing them is the duty of being disinclined toward doing them, of doing them with habitual reluctance, and without the immorality of the hardened heart. Such are all the

many duties that cause pain or deny happiness to others. Moreover, the duty of moral contempt, moral scorn, moral hatred, is always a painful duty.

It is chiefly in ecclesiastical circles that the question has been raised: Can any man do more than his whole duty? Can one acquire merit beyond that which is one's due for the doing of what is due to other persons? Again: the answer is Yes, or No, — according to the point of view and the particular character of the virtue the answer is designed to emphasize. To be generous very naturally seems like a virtue which exceeds the virtue of being merely just. To be honest according to statute law seems to the average business man of today a quite sufficient virtue in his business relations; to be honorable (in the somewhat old-fashioned meaning) and kindly, as an habitual form of conducting business, seems like a kind of superfluity. But we may reply that it is always one's duty to exercise justice in the spirit of kindness, and to temper generosity with the measure which the virtue of justness affords. One's full duty is not simply to be courageous, but to be wisely courageous; nor simply to be prudent, but to be bravely prudent, prudently brave. How to mix the two — on what occasions and in what measure — that is indeed the rub! To strive for the result is to have the spirit of duty, and to effect it is to succeed in doing one's perfect duty — but no more.

In summing up our thoughts upon this conception of duty, when taken in its best modern form as a species of debt always due from each person to all other persons, we cannot do better than quote the closing words of Tourguéneff's Faust: "Not the fulfilment of cherished dreams and aspirations, however lofty they may be — the fulfilment of duty, that is what must be the care of man. Without laying on himself chains, the iron chains, of duty, he cannot reach without a fall the end of his career. But in youth we think — the freer the better, the farther one will get. Youth may be excused for thinking so. But it is shameful to delude one's self when the stern face of truth has looked one in the eyes at last."

And yet, two things remain to be said. It is out of dreams and aspirations of the lofty moral sort, rather than from the calculated obligation of duty, that heroes and martyrs and men who are prophets and forerunners of great moral and spiritual uplifts are made. It is the inner vision of the perfect good, and the summons which this vision issues, that begets a spirit of daring and self-sacrifice, in accordance with which it is impossible, before the issue has settled the problem, to calculate the duties of wisdom, prudence, and the limits which judgment imposes, under ordinary circumstances, upon the multitude of men. From this we cannot argue that heroes, martyrs, and reformers are released from the bonds imposed on all by the Spirit of Duty. We

can only say, that sometimes all the ordinary estimates of what *is* duty seem to fail the questioning soul. The time seems to have come to commit the Self to the impulse of this spirit in us, without questioning, and in the faith that it is inspired by that greater Spirit which quickens and commands the moral evolution of the race.

Out of such thoughts flows the conclusion that there is something yet more comprehensive and commanding, in the realm of moral conceptions and in the motives and rules for attaining the most of that which is morally good, than can be discovered and dislodged by the attempt simply to answer the pressing practical questions: What is it to do one's duty? and How shall I find out what it is my duty to do?

CHAPTER V

THE FEELING, "I CAN"; AND MORAL FREEDOM

ON contemplating some difficult deed, whether as presented in fact before the eyes or in the form of an imaginary picture, there is no feeling which more uniformly rises in human breasts than that of an appreciation of personal force, of the ability "to do things." The voluntary prudence, wisdom, courage, patience, or whatever form of moral virility, that overcomes the difficulty, excites the emotions of moral approbation in a quiet way, if not the more ardent sentiments of æsthetical admiration. But the spectacle of the failure on the part of any or all of these virtues to inspire the strength necessary to surmount great difficulties is visited with feelings of pity, if not of positive disapprobation. Ability to do as right disposition directs, especially when this ability is tested by the unusual obstacles or customarily great opposition which stand in the way, is a possession of real value. Lack of this ability, weakness of will or character, even if the disposition be good,

or at the worst, not "half-bad," is much to be deprecated.

When the difficult deed is a duty demanding to be done by the individual at once, or to be done on some future occasion, a picture of which the imagination is supporting, the feeling called forth is that which expresses itself more or less confidently in the words "I can," or on the contrary, "I can not." These words reveal an emotional judgment, or conviction, which is appreciative of a greater or smaller degree, or a quite complete lack, of the latent capacity to overcome the opposing considerations, and to set into the reality of the deed an answer to the question, What ought I to do? But now it is a question of *my* ability, and of *my* consciousness of *my* ability; for "I" am the subject of the verb "can" or the verb "cannot"; and the appeal is to *my* feeling, whether the answer be made in words that reach the ears of others, or not.

What more natural, then, than the inclination to trust implicitly this first-hand testimony of the individual's final tribunal of truth, — the self-consciousness of ability or of impotency to answer the call of duty when this call has clearly defined itself in response to the question, What ought I to do?

But the testimony of self-consciousness itself, and the evidence afforded by repeated observations of other men, show two classes of facts which greatly modify the conclusions that might other-

wise be derived from this feeling and from the words used in giving it expression. These are, first, that the feeling admits of many degrees, is very variable and unstable, even where it does not pass from one side to the other; and, second, that the event, even where the feeling itself holds out substantially unchanged to the end, often proves how mistaken its answer has all the time actually been.

Indeed, the very language in which oftener than not the feeling "I can" expresses itself shows how vacillating and subject to degrees of rise and fall it really is. For when the duty to be done is one, which for its achievement is sure to call on all the resources of the man morally most strong, a wise forethought suggests the answer: "I do not know; I can at least try; I will do the best that I can." In general the boastful attitude, whether it be a question of physical or intellectual or moral ability, is not the most promising of real achievement in any of these three directions for the exhibition of strength. In general also — and this fact is more pertinent to our thought — the feeling, "I can," fluctuates as the imagination depicts in more vivid or increasingly softened lights the inducements on both sides, and as the emotions sway back and forth in response to these inducements. To such a state of mind, if somewhat prolonged, the history of the rise and fall of the empire under self-control would faithfully correspond only if it

were told in terms of a struggle where the tide of victory often turns, to end at the last in a drawn battle. So often does the doing of duty depend upon what it is customary to call "the psychological moment," — that instant at which temptation, opportunity, and resolution conspire in such a way as to make the choice and its sequent deed appear like a purely mechanical event. All these phenomena, the importance of which for our theory of the morally good and for the practice of genuine morality is so great, are expressed and consecrated by language so familiar that its form does not need to be recalled in any extended fashion. "I know I ought, but I do not know whether I can." "I guess I can, if I try hard." "I hate to 'awfully,' but I mean to do it." "You never can tell what will happen" (that is, with respect to human promises of right doing, uttered or unexpressed). Such are some of the many naïve or more conventional ways in which the fluctuations of this feeling of ability, when facing the picture of duty to be done, is accustomed to utter itself.

But observation also shows how, not infrequently, even when the resolution is made with the most perfect confidence in the possession of the strength to carry it out, and is maintained with apparently undiminished vigor quite up to the moment when the will is called upon to put the resolution into execution, strength gathers or fails, and the promise of the "I can," or the

warning of the "I cannot," is disappointed at the last. On the one side, there are instances of the most carefully premeditated crimes, where the resolution has been steadfastly set for months or even for years in waiting for an opportunity fit for the accomplishment, and yet the will necessary has suddenly given way at the very moment of the realization of opportunity. More often, perhaps, have there been cases where the person who from the best of motives has "always meant to do the right thing," if ever the right time came, has found its actual doing quite impossible to accomplish under the momentary but contemporary stress of indolence, indifference, or other duty-disturbing emotions. And while men base all their daily intercourse, in every sort of human relation, on calculations concerning what they will themselves, or what others will do, under given sets of fairly well calculable circumstances, it is perfectly well understood that none of these calculations resemble those with which sums in mathematics are worked out, or the prospective positions of the planets at any fixed date in the future. To be sure, there has been a considerable school of students of human history (and some sad remnants of this school still remain) which has claimed to discover laws "governing" (whatever that always ambiguous phrase may mean) the conduct of men in the making of history, that have all the demonstrable certainty and usefulness for pre-

diction which belong to the most exact of the physical or chemical sciences. But with the great majority of men of common-sense such claims meet with little acceptance. "You can never exactly tell" appears to this majority the better to express the safe attitude toward the will of the individual or of the multitude, under the bewilderment of changed conditions, or the pressure of added burdens, or the suddenly and enormously increased stresses of temptation.

Such are, in fact, the phenomena that answer to this aspect of the moral problem. But the at least relative trustworthiness of the feeling "I can" has an important bearing on both the theoretical and the practical answer to the question, What ought I to do? And one's attitude toward the debated propositions respecting the reality of this feeling, and the dependence of the essentials of morality upon the side espoused in the controversies which have raged for centuries over the so-called "freedom of the will," are of no small importance in practical morals. It is quite impossible to regard this feeling as without significance for one's moral estimate of oneself or of others. Indeed, matters of profound social import and wide-spreading if not quite universal civil and political interest are intimately concerned in the attempt to throw light on the problem of moral freedom. When, then, even so fair and cautious a writer as the late Professor Sidgwick, in his spirit of scholastic calm and measured

way, undertakes "to dispel any lingering doubts . . . as to the practical unimportance of the Free Will controversy," we cannot follow him thus far, but must dissent in the interests of practical morality. For even should it be shown (although we firmly believe the attempt to be forever destined to failure) that the immediate results of Determinism would not essentially alter the working maxims of social morality, or the prevailing customs of right and wrong conduct, the most important question would remain essentially the same, would be, indeed, not really touched or even closely approached. For that question concerns the possibility of reconciling the theory of Determinism with the demands of the practical reason, with the rationality of moral consciousness. Just as the theory which holds that all knowledge, in respect of the conviction that the mental representations in some sense correspond to real beings and actual occurrences, is mere illusion, cannot fail to influence our attitude toward science; just so the loss of the belief in the trustworthiness of the conviction that moral imputability is rational and has its justification in the freedom of the individual person, cannot fail to influence our attitude toward the moral problem. Indeed, the question, "What ought I to do?" has a greatly diminished importance, if it does not lose all its most serious import, for the man who has convinced himself that the feeling "I can" is merely illusory.

It is, however, not to be wondered at that controversy has arisen, and has continued only to ebb and flow but never entirely to disappear, over the problem proposed under the term "The Freedom of the Will." The motives for this controversy are in part inherent in the very nature of the phenomena. They are in part also of an extraneous character; and of this part some of the individual factors have a truly scientific value; but some are of a somewhat sinister origin. These last arise in the wish of the wrong-doer, or of some of his colleagues (and to this number we all in our time and way belong) to apologize for the wrong-doing by a doctrine of its origin which removes all the reasonableness from the feelings of approbation and disapprobation — of the strictly moral sort — and also nullifies the feeling of merit or its opposite (of moral well-desert or ill-desert).

A dispassionate scientific examination justifies the reality of this feeling of ability, — but not in the way, or to the degree, which is often claimed by the advocates, or controverted by the opponents, of the doctrine of the freedom of the will. The emotions and convictions in which, rather than in the form of an indubitable and infallible self-consciousness, this phase of moral feeling reveals itself, are indeed, as has already been admitted, not infrequently of a doubtful and inconstant character. The old-fashioned, philosophical, or theological argument, that every man

knows by immediate self-knowledge his possession of a free-will, cannot be maintained in consistency with the science of human experience. Indeed, we may say that in this way no one knows what he really is or what he can do or cannot do. All this, every human being, so far as he knows it at all, knows only imperfectly through a growing, a constantly shifting, and often disappointing life-history. We do not look in on our souls, much less do we look in on the souls of others, and see there enthroned a so-called free-will, which is fit to be accused of, even if it does not audibly and positively claim, the responsibility, because it has the ability, of bringing to pass this or that piece of conduct.

On the other hand, the arguments on which all forms of theological or philosophical Fatalism and of so-called scientific Determinism are based, when examined in the light of the facts of moral consciousness and the experience of the race in moral development, appear even more abstract, scholastic, and inconclusive. These arguments do not recognize the limitations to all rational attempts at explanation in respect to their own attempts to explain; but neither do they really explain what they profess to explain. We must then go back to the facts of feeling — for they are chiefly such — in which this problem of ethical problems has its obscure origin. We shall not find in them an *a priori* demonstration of a theory of Freedom of the Will; but we shall find

the basis in experience for a reasonable and practical claim to moral freedom.

About the existence and influence upon conduct of the feelings which are expressed in the declarations, "I can," or "I cannot," there is little room for doubt. They are familiar to every normal human adult; they are the habitual accompaniment of every deed, whether considered from the moral points of view or not, if it is for any reason made the subject even of momentary deliberation. Let us take the case of the athlete as he stands, pole in hand, before the bar which has just been set so that he may "beat the record" for the standing high-jump. His trainer or his own inner voice is whispering the question "can you do it, or can you not?" And he is responding to his trainer or to himself, either "I surely can," or "I think or hope I can," or "I am afraid that I cannot." The answer is framed to accord with a certain measure of his ability that is set in the form of the memory of what he has done or failed to do in the past; — but this is not all: he has a feeling of confidence or of shrinking before the imagination which suggests a limit of strength and skill that *may be* drawn from the as yet unexhausted, and never yet quite measured resources lying hidden in the mysterious depths of the Self. Perhaps he may do better than he has ever done before. He is sure he can; he thinks or hopes he may; he fears or knows that he cannot.

Now this feeling of ability which we have just described may be considered as almost or quite exclusively a nervo-muscular affair. It can become realized in the deed only if the habitual training of the nervous and muscular systems has given them the purely physiological ability to respond to the demands, so to speak, which are made upon them by the willing mind. This, then, may be a case where, literally, the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak"; if so, no sort of blame attaches itself to the spirit of the will to execute the deed.

But let us add another element to the various shades of the feeling which are expressed by the words "I can" (or its opposite, in any of the various intermediate varieties of coloring to which all such feeling is subject as a matter of course). The honor of the contestant's college or club is at stake; others, as the phrase is, "are banking on him." His doing his very best, especially if it can be something better than he has ever done before, is now a matter of obligation to others, — though laid upon him, it may well be, in a somewhat morally dubious way. But however laid upon him, it has a certain potent bearing on the mental attitude with which the proposed deed is contemplated. He may succeed, or he may fail; but whatever the event may be, he is bound in honor to do his very best. And the sense of honor as an obligation issues a most appealing summons to those latent po-

tencies which lie hidden in the depths of the Self, but which that same conscious Self now determines to call forth and put the full measure of them into the contemplated end.

Writers on morals, and men generally in their practice as regarded from the point of view of morality, have been accustomed to play fast and loose with this sense of honor. On the one hand, they have raised it to the dominant power, the final court of appeal in determining the good and the bad of conduct and of character. On the other hand, they have denied it all moral significance; or have even denounced it as the devil's own way of twisting and corrupting the most fundamental principles of morality. But the sense of honor properly so-called is always a form of moral obligation. It becomes the instrument of moral evil only when attached to deeds and courses of conduct, in a conventional and hypocritical way, that are the very opposite of those virtues which the prevailing sense of honor ought to espouse and to practise. But we are now noting the fillip which this feeling gives to the feeling of ability; and not only this, but to the actual forth-putting of ability. Many a man has done what he never could have done, what he scarcely dared to imagine he could do, under the incitement of this stimulus from the sense of being bound in honor.

But for the man who has answered the question, What ought I to do? by making once for all the

spirit of duty-doing his most powerful motive, the way to draw on the reserves of moral personality is, of all men, in the most hopeful condition. His first inquiry is this: What precisely is my duty? His second inquiry follows: How and when shall I set about doing my duty? In attempting to answer the first, he invokes all his past experience in the making of moral judgments; he summons all the unused resources of making wise judgments, in order to meet the special difficulties of each particular case. And if he has walked long in the morally right way, so far as this right way in the past has been made clear to him, he has good store of habits and large experience of consequences to help in the decision of the question, What am I in duty bound to do?

But suppose that the moral athlete or the moral weakling, or just the average man who is apt to be neither, now stands face to face with the doing of the duty, already knowing or feeling fairly confident what that duty is. Even the athlete will not always and infallibly feel sure of his "I can." The weakling and the average man are sure very frequently to be in a state of "doubtful ability," whether they are aware of the fact, or not. Of the habitually good man the community somewhat confidently expects that he *will be* able to do what he feels in duty bound to do; he himself is modestly but sincerely confident that his ability can be made to measure up to the demands which are likely to be made

upon it. He knows, however, that not infrequently good men have sadly disappointed others and bitterly disappointed themselves in this regard. Neither the community nor the man himself will expect with much confidence that the weakling will break his long-time habit of shirking or violating the injunctions of conscience. It is, indeed, still possible even with him, that he may do so; not a few men in the aggregate have, in a single instance, broken suddenly with the power of evil habits; not a few have turned, as if in obedience to a heavenly vision, all at once from darkness to the light. As to the average man, the one who knows himself and allows himself to be sometimes on the right side and sometimes on the wrong; the public openly, and he, perhaps secretly, believes that the result in his case will be chiefly determined by the weight of the inducements bearing toward the one hand or the other. To say this, is not to divide all men into sheep and goats, into the wholly good and pretty considerably bad; it is only to suggest the various ways in which men do actually distinguish themselves in respect of the reciprocal reactions of the feelings, "I can" and "I ought."

But there is one more important aspect of this feeling of moral ability which must be looked frankly in the face. Under the influence of the sense of honor, and the tinge of moral responsibility which it imparts to the emotions and convictions of the athlete as he stands ready to draw

on all the powers which lie, habitually or in a latent way, under his control, there is a certain resolution which he knows that he *ought to* make, and which he knows that he *can* make. He may not be able to say, with assurance, I can; but he can say, with assurance, I will try.

It is the general opinion that he who does his very best, and yet fails, unless he has through negligence or self-indulgence also failed to be just then at his very best, is, in this particular instance, not to blame. It is necessary to make this statement with all its accompanying reservations, otherwise it would not correspond with the facts. Evil habits are laid up against men, — not only as handicaps which nature imposes on them in a purely mechanical way, but also as features of moral obliquity attaching themselves to the personality, which never cease to be regarded as such until the will of that particular person asserts itself by throwing them off. And if these handicaps are made the heavier by some wrong-doing perpetrated when the call to overcome in the interests of honor or of duty was full near the time of its issue; then too, the moral consciousness thinks itself justified in imputing blame to the individual person for this particular failure.

Suppose once more, that our athlete, as he stands face-to-face with his difficult but as yet unperformed task, is tempted to retreat, or not to call forth all his reserve resources for its accom-

plishment, — by fear or by some form of bribery offered by the "backers" of the other side. The deed of will which is to realize what there is of the justifiable feeling of being able for its accomplishment may be "thrown into the melting pot," as it were. A conflict of motives arises which now threatens, now allures, the feeling of ability in opposite directions. The sense of honor pulls in one direction, the emotion of cowardice in the other. The call of duty summons here; the solicitations of avarice say, "Go there." The character and intensity of this conflict will — there can be no doubt — depend to a large extent on the inherited and acquired character of the soul in which the conflict takes place, and on the intensity of the desires and other motive or deterrent emotions between which the conflict takes place. What now has become for the time being of the conviction which answers to the typical avowal, "I can"? It remains, — substantially unimpaired, but with modified intensity and in altered form. For, when regarded in its essential characteristic: *The feeling is not simply "I can" if the inducement is sufficient; but I am able in a measure to decide whether the inducement shall be sufficient, or not.* And this uncovers the psychological fallacy which is most superficial with all the current forms of Determinism: they regard choices as determined by motives, in the same way in which motives are determined by physiological and physical causes, and both after

the pattern of the causal relation maintaining itself in the case of the phenomena of external nature; whereas it is equally, and even more significantly true that motives are determined by choices, and that the ability to make choice of motives belongs to the essential features of the mysterious life of a Self. I can make my own motives. Or, — more concretely said, — within certain limits which it always remains quite impossible definitely to fix, I can choose between and among motives; I can give the preference of fixed attention to one motive rather than to another; I can consider their weight in a scale which does not measure values simply by their gross intensity or the amounts of pleasure which they promise; I can listen to the voice which says "You ought this" and "You ought not that"; I can summon my reserves to decide for the morally right in the conflict that goes on within the waiting soul; I can, in a word, be a person whose doing is something more than mere action; whose action is *conduct*, with all the profound moral significance which properly belongs to this term.

That this ability of the moral sort is limited and is always a matter of development, we have no disposition to deny. Indeed, all human language emphasizes its restrictions; all human experience reveals the fact and some of the laws of its development. No son of man is born with the feeling "I can"; no human infant is able to

choose what it will, though it has a sort of amœboid "will of its own." Nor are the children of men endowed with an equal inheritance of reserves which may be called upon when they are needed to make the Self strong against temptation; nor are all able under equally favorable circumstances to develop and successfully exploit such reserves. Selves are not all alike in their moral possibilities, any more than they are in their physical characteristics. On the contrary, not a few, but the great majority, are handicapped in the former by deficiencies in the latter forms of inheritance. But what — alas! — is even more obvious, with countless multitudes the environment is such as to restrict greatly, as almost to annihilate their ability for the cultivation of some of the most fundamental virtues of the moral life.

Into the attempt to interpret the feeling, "I can," and to understand the better its relation to the feeling, "I ought," there must enter as one of its most important and constant factors the entire psychological and ethical doctrine of habit. Deeds good and bad, and the ability to do them, and the responsibility for having done them, are all intimately and inextricably involved in the doctrine of habit. The measure of the present ability to do or to refrain from doing depends on the way ability has been exercised in the past. Practice in any particular virtue generally, but not invariably, increases the ease with which that same virtue is accomplished, and the strength

with which the temptation to turn to its opposite is resisted. So well known is all this, in its stricter application to the doing of right and wrong, that little more need be said in this connection about the matter. But this general truth cannot be too often reiterated, too strongly emphasized, — familiar and homely truth as it seems to be: *The laws of habit are essential to the reality (and even to the conception) of any true personal development.* Without them the past could not be fixed in forms to admit of any continuity of growth; and continuity of growth is essential to the production of that individuality, the highest conceivable type of which is the individual person. The development of self-control is essential to this kind of individuality.

Some such description as has been given of the phenomena which constitute and accompany the feeling, I can, undoubtedly corresponds to the facts of life. The facts are so universal, and they so persistently and emphatically demand interpretation at their face value, that they can neither themselves be pronounced "illusory," nor can any argument derived from other classes of phenomena overthrow the conclusions which the moral consciousness of mankind has from time immemorial derived from them.

There are other forms of moral feeling and judgment which, both in time and logically, follow the feelings of obligation and of ability, and which effectually corroborate them both.

THE FEELING: "I CAN"

We have already referred to the feeling of approbation (and its opposite) and to the feeling of merit or well-desert (and its opposite). To that phase of moral judgment, which as initial fact of feeling and rational assumption underlies and justifies the placing of responsibility and the awarding of merit, the theologians have given the title "imputability." As modern ethics interpret the term it must mean: There is no doing of right or doing of wrong which does not belong to somebody; and in its sane and unmystical view, "somebody" always means some particular body. There is no bad deed done, but some person has done badly. There is no good deed done, but the doing is the merit of the person who did that very deed. There is no sin committed but some sinner must in truth say: That particular sin, whatever the stress of temptation from others or my partnership in its committal with others, — that particular sin was my very own. Even the Zulus have the proverb: "When a fish is killed its own tail is inserted in its own mouth."

It is true that wherever the conception of personality becomes blurred, the so-called doctrine of imputability becomes distorted as though seen through blurred eyes. In fact, also, the closeness with which the deed imputed fits the person to whom it is imputed depends on the degree to which his personal development has attained. Children are not "imputable" as adults are.

The highly developed Self *is* more responsible than is the human being who has scarcely acquired enough development to be called a Self. Thus the Thlinkeet Indians, if they cannot catch the actual doer of a crime, kill one of his family or tribe instead. According to the native Samoan law a plaintiff might seek redress for the murder of one of his own relations "from the brother, son, or other relative of the guilty party." Among the natives of Australia when a crime was committed, and especially if the culprit escaped, only persons unconnected with the family believed themselves to be safe, until some one had expiated the crime. Confucius made it a duty for a son to slay his father's murderer, just as the Mosaic law insisted on a strictly retaliatory penalty for bloodshed. But these aberrations of justice, as to who should bear and who should inflict the penalty for wrong-doing, do not disprove but only illustrate the firmness of men's belief that the "I ought" implies the "I can"; that personal responsibility is justified on rational grounds by the facts of personal ability. Like the theological dogma which laid a basis for the justice of punishment in the transmission to his descendants of the guilt of Adam, they are due, the rather, to prejudiced and false, and even absurd conceptions of what it is to be fully *A Person.*

It is upon such experiences of the consciousness, "I can," that the relations of men in the family, in economic and commercial intercourse,

in the state, and in all social organization, are founded and conducted. Men act under motives, but are not strictly determined by motives; they are "creatures of habit," but they make their habits and are responsible in a measure for them. They are not of strict necessity the slaves of habit, so long at least as they remain with the power of a choice which may at any time summon from the secret storehouse of the Self resources hitherto unrevealed and even unsuspected. And to be possessed of such resources is of the very nature of a real person, a developed Self. Such is the popular, and also the reasoned view.

Similar opinions and convictions have been given logical expression and defended in the form of elaborate arguments, by theologians and philosophers, under the title of the doctrine of the Freedom of the Will. But the term itself is not well chosen. For it seems to imply some separable faculty, which may be looked on as dominating the other faculties so-called, taking them in charge and "bringing them to the heel," or not, before another faculty called "conscience." Such a representation, whether intentionally and virtually or in appearance only, violates, on the one hand, the unity of the mind, or rather of the Self; and on the other hand, it minimizes the interdependence in their co-operation of all the various elements of this mental unity. For *the will*, then, let us substitute Personality in its active aspect; and for *Freedom* of the will, the

acceptance of the mysterious but indubitable and infinitely precious fact, that the individual may, in spite of limitations and counter inducements, through self-discipline in forming habits of right choice, develop that freedom of personal life which consists in the progressive realization of the moral ideals. [This sentence is indeed rather elaborate and includes a number of debatable and difficult thoughts. But it is worth, in part at least, the trouble of the analysis which its understanding seems to demand.]

Even such a doctrine of moral freedom as that which we have just attempted to expound, with the eye always directed on the practical value which it may have in helping to answer the question, What ought I to do? will doubtless find itself disputed from several sides, and rejected by not a few minds. These objections cannot all be raised, much less answered in detail, in this connection.[1] They are, indeed, for the most part rather purely academic and are probably of not nearly so much effect on the practice of morality as is ordinarily supposed. But a brief criticism of some of the most common and seemingly most convincing appears to be demanded in order to clear the way for the instructions which

[1] For a more elaborate treatment of this difficult subject from different points of view, see the other works of the author: "Elements of Physiological Psychology" (revised edition), pp. 645, 664f.; "Psychology, Descriptive and Explanatory," chap. xxvi; "Philosophy of Conduct," chap. viii; "Philosophy of Religion," I, 334f., 601f.; II, 342f., 344f.

the truth of the consciousness, "I can," has to teach to the honest inquirer into his duty, whether as respects a long course of conduct, or some particular deed.

The *pseudo*-arguments against moral freedom, which consist in mere assertions, may be answered by counter assertions. Such, for example, are the declarations of Riehl: "Determinism is the real ground of Morality"; of Höffding: "Psychology, like every other science, must be deterministic"; of M. Luys, who regards all psychoses, including volitions and choices, as determined by the brain, which dictates them to the conscious mind by a kind of incomprehensible jugglery. To these and all similar facile solutions of the mystery of personality we may respond with even greater confidence by contrary assertions. Thus: "Determinism undermines the ground of Morality"; "Psychology has absolutely no right to make any such assumption, and the assumption squarely contradicts some of the most incontrovertible facts of Psychology"; and so far as we know anything about the relations of nervous changes in the brain and the phenomena of consciousness, "M. Luys' figure of speech is little less than absurd."

The old-fashioned deterministic theory relied on the universality of the causal principle as interpreted in figures of speech derived quite purely from a superficial view of physical phenomena. Here was incontrovertible *a priori* proof that

choices and deeds of will, like all other classes of events, *must be* completely explained by pre-existing events regarded as their causes. Desires, passions, and other forms of emotion were regarded as motives which under the laws of habit acted in a dynamic way upon the will. By their intensity they overcame opposing motives; or by the suddenness of their attack they took the will off-guard, and so succeeded in forcing the illusion of choice in the direction of the line of least resistance, as it were. As this application of the causal law became more suffused with the discoveries of modern psycho-physical science, it took the form to which reference has already been made in the declaration of M. Luys. The real chain of causal sequences, the purely mechanical train of events, was assumed to take place in the nervous substance, especially in the cerebral areas; and thus the sequences of mental states do not cause one another any more than do the successive puffs of steam from the locomotive; it is the steam in the boiler, under the successive changes in pressure, which is the real cause of each puff, and of the order in which the puffs follow one another. Never did theory make more unjustifiable use of inept and stupid figures of speech.

Now any consideration of the bearing of the causal law, and of the doctrine of the distribution between and among a number of events of the forces latent or kinetic, upon the phenomena of

morals, demands a thorough metaphysical criticism of the conceptions involved; such are the conceptions of "cause," "law," "exertion," "distribution" or "influence," of different amounts of so-called "energy" or "force." Two remarks must suffice. All these conceptions, and especially those of the latency, the becoming kinetic, the application, and the distribution, of energy or force, have their origin in this same experience which we express by the "I can" or "I cannot." It is the experience of a limited ability belonging to the hidden resources of the Self, — of an "I can," which holds true, however, only under certain circumstances, and under certain relations with other beings than ourselves. In a word, if we did not have this experience with ourselves as wills, and therefore as sources of power, we should have no conception of energy and no law of causation to discuss or to employ.

Still further: Even in our application of the conception of cause and effect to material things and physical events, we are always compelled to recognize a certain inexplicable *residuum*, so to say, which we ascribe to the nature of the things themselves. All we know about the actual working in the world outside, of this so-called principle of causality, and of the so-called laws according to which the principle does its work, amounts only to this. We discover by observation and experiment that things behave toward other things, and elements of things

toward other elements of the same things, in more or less uniform ways, in dependence upon the relations existing between them; *but also always* as partly determined by what we call the "nature" of the things and of the elements themselves. When we are asked to define precisely what we mean by this word "nature" as applied to any particular thing, we can only refer in explanation to the observed or inferred behavior of that same thing. And so our explanation moves round in a circle out of which it can never be chased or climb by its own inherent skill and strength. It is like the time-honored description of the real reason "Why dogs delight to bark and bite." Oxygen and hydrogen combine to make the (previous to experience) totally unexpected and unpredictable compound, water. We explain by enumerating the quantities of each that enter into the combination, and the circumstances of temperature, pressure, etc. But still, Why? Why oxygen and hydrogen, rather than carbon and nitrogen? Because of differences inherent in the nature of all four. But what do we know about the real nature of any of these four? We know nothing, and can never know anything, beyond what we find out as to the way in which, under an ever increasing variety of circumstances and relations, they actually behave. And the more we know of this sort, the more resourceful becomes the mysterious, "quality-packed," and inexhaustible nature of the thing itself. Increas-

ing explanations increase the mystery of the unexplained.

It is no unmeaning figure of speech, then, when we declare that every thing, and every element of every thing, from the star Sirius to the ion, from the vibrations of ether we call light to the emanations — if emanations they are — which we call Gamma rays, is in some real sort a being with an incalculable fund of *self*-determination. In a special way this is true of all living beings and living elements of living beings. As said the English physiologist Foster: "Every amœba has a will of its own." Its determination is not wholly from the outside. The more we know of every species of bacteria and of every living cell, the more startling appear the performances which compel this conclusion. But the phenomena of *self*-determination are essential to the very being of a *Self*. They are the characteristic experiences that, quite as much as any other, help us to recognize the existence of a person, and to mark and understand the development of personal life.

There is one other way of controverting a reasonable doctrine of moral freedom to which a brief reference is due. In this form of Determinism the argument is that the individual cannot have moral freedom, because there are statistics to show that the multitudes of individuals frequently act alike under like influences. We will make this reference by quoting a somewhat lengthy passage from the "Philosophy of Con-

duct" (p. 180f.). "To every such argument may be opposed the undoubted facts that the validity of the statistics themselves is usually exceedingly questionable; that the interpretation of the statistics is generally doubtful; and that other classes of statistics very severely test, if they do not wholly controvert, this form of the deterministic hypothesis. For example, if the number of illegitimate births in some district of Southern Europe suddenly suffers a great diminution, in close connection with the revival of well-paid employment for the female operatives in its silk mills, this does not prove that Maria or Angelica has been compelled or determined to become virtuous thereby, or even that she and her companion have really become more virtuous. Probably, it simply shows that a larger number of couples are now financially able to comply with the legal restrictions which the State has unfortunately imposed upon marriage. But the virtue or the vice of sexual intercourse is not wholly, or even chiefly, determined by statute. Maria and Angelica, in that eternal conflict in which we are all placed between our moral ideals and our lower impulses and inferior interests, may choose according to their best light to be either good or bad, quite irrespective of the conditions of the silk market. Doubtless for them as for us all, the external conditions and internal excitement, but above all the habitual past choices, will make goodness, or badness, much easier or much harder

in any particular case. But for either of these two souls, as for millions of others, there may come a moment in prayer, or reflection, or memory, when the worth of the moral ideal will be so revealed as to let it assert its more legitimate influence. Then the conscious self-determining Self will have its best chance to assert and to establish its right to a higher and more effective form of moral freedom. For sudden reforms and complete religious conversions are, after all, not such rare and isolated phenomena in human society. And they constitute hard facts for any theory of Determinism that wishes to plant itself upon purely empirical grounds."

"Let it be admitted, however, that good deeds and bad deeds, virtues and crimes, tend to go in groups. This is only to reënforce a truth necessary to be taken account of by every attempt at a philosophy of conduct. Certainly men are influenced in their behavior as individuals by the social conditions under which they exist and develop. The obviously criminal population is always largely made up of a class that, on account of discouraging environment, relatively great susceptibility to impulsive considerations, and a low degree of intelligence, has, on the average, a less degree of moral freedom. Moral freedom is always, indeed, a matter of degrees. The theory of morals, as well as the practice of enlightened men, takes all this into account. We expect that the final judgment and the ideally perfect

judge will not fail to authenticate this truth. But especially in the most enlightened and civilized nations there are not a few who have fallen down from the higher into the lower stratum; and some come up from the lower, in spite of all their burdens and temptations, into strata that lie far above. But falls and reforms and risings, in the ethical scale, are significant of the same portentous fact; the character and destiny of the individual are not all strictly determined irrespective of the self-determination of the conscious, rational, and ethically-constituted Self."

On the whole, then, the message which comes from the consciousness, "I can," to the one who asks eagerly and persistently the question, "What ought I to do?" is a message of courage and good cheer rather than discouragement or despair. The latent possibility of winning moral freedom is an essential characteristic of all personal life. But that possibility must be realized by the formation of habits of right conduct under the impulse of the feeling, "I ought," and the guidance of the judgment as to what I ought; and with the view of progressively reaching the moral ideal.

What then ought one to do, out of respect for this endowment of a chance to win the priceless good of moral freedom? One ought, once for all, to choose this good as the goal of all endeavor. And one ought to cultivate the habits that lead toward it to the extremest limits of one's resources in self-determination.

CHAPTER VI

THE WEIGHT AND WORTH OF MORAL IDEALS

WHEN adult judgment witnesses a deed that appears on the surface to be of moral import, it is apt promptly to pronounce it either good or bad, even though it may have been the expression of the psycho-physical mechanism, or of animal instinct, or of some pretty nearly blind impulse. In such cases it sees moral quality in the deed rather than in the idea; for the intellectual attitude appropriate to the right disposition may have been entirely wanting. Thus we say "good" or "fine" to the action of the unthinking child, when this action appears to spring from indignation at cruelty and injustice, or from pity at the suffering of his playmate or pet animal, or from the quite thoughtless outburst of generosity which leads to the sharing of his sweets with others. Nor is all this feeling of approbation, and the judgment which affirms it, to be wholly denied moral significance.

On the other hand, when the action is repulsive to moral feeling, the judgment appropriate to this

repulsion is accorded to the deed with almost equal promptness and urgency; although the deed itself, in this case too, may be the expression of a quite thoughtless and "unintentioned," if not unintentional, impulse. Thoughtless cruelty, or indifference to the suffering of others, or gross selfishness, is disapproved by refined and thoughtful moral judgment, It is condemned not simply as "bad form," or as foreboding bad character in the future; but also as being a piece of bad conduct. In the latter case, however, if the judgment be well refined and suffused with the results of reflection upon the essentials of morality, the condemnation is sure to be modified by the lack of intention which characterized the deed. We excuse the childish culprit by some such saying as this: "He had no *idea* what he was doing"; or "He did not *mean* any harm."

Now, in order that this excuse itself may not be condemned as immorally thoughtless, it must imply that the doer of the wrong deed could not have "had any idea" of the moral import of his action, because his intellect was not enough developed to frame moral conceptions and to reason about matters of conduct. He is excused for lack of the full morality which requires that the mind as well as the impulse be put into the deed; that is, on account of his lack of developed judgment. And if the development really attained is abreast of that of the average human being of the same age, under similar influences of

environment and inheritance, the excuse for the badness of the conduct is esteemed to be as nearly complete as any excuse can be. We extend it still further to cover the case of the human idiot, or of the child not up to the average, defective, or not quite *compos mentis*.

It is a sort of indirect or "left-handed" compliment to the good-heartedness of human nature in general, that men are not equally ready to apply this rule of moral judgment the other way. We are readier to withhold blame from the thoughtless bad deed, than praise from the thoughtless good deed. It would seem unwarrantably cool, if not criminally cynical, toward the really good thing that a good deed always is, if we were too eager to say of the average man, or of the child, or even of the defective or idiot: "He deserves no praise, for he had no *idea* what he was doing." We considerately diminish the condemnation, when we are convinced that the wrong-doer lacked the capacity for knowledge; — whether of the value of the impulse from which the bad deed arose, or of the badness of the deed, or of the consequences in the deterioration of his own personality, or in the increase of suffering and shame for others. On the other hand, we kindly refuse to withhold, or we in appearance refrain from withholding the full meed of approval, when the same reason ought to work the other way.

This failure to make the rule work equally well both ways has just been attributed to the un-

drawn "milk of human kindness." But the explanation can be only partial. By putting ourselves as much as possible into the attitude of the severe impartial judge, we cannot succeed in preventing the scales from tipping in favor of a somewhat unequal judgment of thoughtless deeds, both bad and good. Good impulses have the reward of approving judgment; — not only because such judgment gives pleasure to him who passes it, but also because such impulses give promise of the development of a full-orbed moral life, when they are embodied in the wise and consistent intellect which experience imparts, and are directed toward the ends which fix the ideals of the morally perfect personality. But bad impulses are in some measure excused; — not because they fail to arouse judgments which are in themselves unpleasant, but because they by no means indicate a moral condition without abundant reason for good hope. In fact, the very impulses which express themselves in these unthinking bad deeds are in general important and forceful sources of good deeds, when they have received the guidance of wise and consistent judgment, and have been directed toward the realization of the right ideals. In a word, there is no human impulse that good will may or may not employ in good deeds.

These and all similar phenomena may serve to convince us that without the work of intellect in forming conceptions, judgments, and ideas of

value (or ideals), there is no such attainment as moral development or even as morality in the fuller meaning of the term. Without that higher equipment for ideality which goes beyond the merely animal intelligence, and which we call "human reason," conduct as a moral affair, in distinction from the psycho-physical and mental mechanism involved in mere action, could not exist. The truly moral person must have capacity for ideation of the higher sort. He must develop ideas of Time, of Self, and of Causal Relations, which far outstrip the possibilities of development open to the lower animals. But above all must he become able to frame and to appreciate "ideas of value" properly so-called. In a word: Morality requires a rational Mind.

In his greater work on Ethics the philosopher Aristotle makes a division of human "excellencies" into the "intellectual" and the "moral." One of his modern commentators declares that he then founded a distinction which has lasted ever since. There is such a distinction; but we cannot run it through the virtues or employ it to separate the intellectual man from the moral man as though they belonged to different types of humanity.

It is not our purpose to argue on metaphysical grounds, and at length, to show that without a sufficient development of the so-called categories or intuitions which in man's case give him a Time-consciousness, a Self-consciousness, and a

right to apply the ideas of Cause and Effect to the explanation of his experience, he could not be the moral person that he actually is. Consider for a moment, however, the work of the human imagination in conceiving the picture of a personal life, extending, with its consciousness of responsibility for what it has done, through years, and even through æons of *time;* in some sort the same Self, although undergoing a constant process of change and of development; with its deeds imputable and linked together in some kind of sequence as causes and effects. It is not philosophers, or the few devoted to the abstract speculations of a scholastic metaphysics alone, that have this marvellous power of imagination. In the meanings which the lowest human savages give to the conceptions of Time, Self, and Causality, there is no animal that bears any comparison worthy of establishing a common ethical standard. When the Bechuana chief said to the African missionary Casalis, "One event is the son of another, and we must never forget the parentage," he made use of a figure of speech to hold a truth, the metaphysical import of which far transcends all merely animal intelligences. What trained horse or dog or anthropoid ape could picture a future Tartarus or Elysium, people it with invisible gods whose attitude toward human conduct remains unchanged long after men have forgotten their own past; and thus minister to the belief that the consequences of conduct, and the rewards

of merit or demerit, remain unaffected by the everlastingness of an imagined heaven or an imagined hell?

When considering some of the earlier stages in the growth of the feeling of responsibility we were led to notice that the individual's judgments of the right and the wrong of conduct are at first almost completely determined by the preëxisting judgments of those constituting his social environment. The result is that the newcomer into this environment feels in duty bound to conform to the prevailing customs. When he asserts his individuality in an impulsive way, he is whipped into line, not by the stings of his own conscience so much as by the smart of the lash wielded in the name of the public conscience. Were this the end of the process of forming moral judgments, no individual could attain a truly adult morality. But there are few individuals indeed who do not become to some extent, and to some purpose, either good or bad critics of the prevailing customs. Some of the judgments these customs embody cease to be according to the individual's *ideas* of what is right or wrong; they fall, perhaps, as judged by maturing judgment, far short of the individual's *ideals*, of his ideas of what ought to be, but now is not. Hence arise the outcries of the would-be reformers of custom, like that of Laotsu: "Nowadays we despise love of humanity and are insolent; we despise economy and are wasteful; we despise

modesty, and try to surpass every one else. These ways lead to death."

It makes not the slightest difference with our contention, whether things are better now than they were or worse than they were; whether the times are improving from the moral point of view, or are running rapidly along on the downhill track. The point is this: Changed ideas are controverting and breaking down the customs which embody the moral judgments made by previous generations; they are altering the more obvious and express social virtues or social vices into which our ancestors had fallen. In the midst of all these changes of ideas, however, and of the opinions and practices to which they give quick or more or less tardy birth, there are three characteristics which stick fast to the judgments. Moral judgments have only one sort of subject, *conduct*, and one sort of predicate, *right* (or its opposite, not-right or wrong). Thinking is either logical or illogical; speech is correct or incorrect; judgment itself is either true or false; but conduct is either right or wrong. And, second, Moral judgment is properly tinged with moral emotion; it should be sound and thoughtful, but it does not profit by prettiness of literary dressing or coolness of scientific precision. Third, Moral judgment establishes a claim on the will. In general, one must do something with moral judgments. If you make them and trust them for true, you must live by them. They are not

like calculations as to the strength or cost of material necessary to make a projected bridge to the other side of the river; they are themselves the bridge on which you must choose whether to cross, or to take the responsibility of refusing to cross, when you come to the river.

That moral ideas and moral judgments, together with the prevalent customs which embody and enforce them, have (at least, over a considerable portion of civilized mankind) been rising to higher standards of ideal excellence and of efficiency in promoting human welfare, there is considerable historical evidence to show. Whether the average individual is any more essentially moral, or any more happy on account of a real improvement in social morality, are other questions more difficult to answer. How much, if at all, the moral ideals have themselves essentially changed is still another question, about which we shall have something to say at another time. The principal causes of this advance toward certain ideals of moral excellence seem to us to be, chiefly, the following four.

Those who would reduce all moral problems to economic problems, and all improvement in morality (or, the rather, in morals, in the more limited meaning of the word) to improvement in economic conditions, have certainly something to be said on their side; — and this, in spite of their pretty nearly complete misapprehension as to the essential nature of morality when viewed

from the psychological point of view, and their quite inexcusable disregard of the spiritual and "other-worldly" nature of some of the most inalienable and powerful of the moral ideals. A reference back to what was said about the way in which those relations of human beings that define the different classes of duties are themselves affected by economic changes might suffice to illustrate this claim. For example: The relations of the sexes inside and out of the life of the family are profoundly altered by economic influences. The family life prevailing over most of Europe and of North America at the present time is based upon monogamic marriage, of a kind where the woman is dependent upon the man economically, and the man dependent upon the woman for a home and for children that he can call his own. It is exceedingly unlikely that this economic relation can be greatly changed and preserve what the communities who have cherished and developed it have regarded as the safe and right moral relations of the sexes.

Another potent cause of changes in ideas and customs regulating or prescribing the right and wrong of conduct has been the breaking-up and mixing of classes, and the increased intercourse of different races with one another for purposes of trade, or education, or menial and professional employment; or for the benefits of travel or change of residence. No longer can an Aristotle write

of ethics in a profound and comprehensive way, and yet exclude one class of human beings from all application of the ethical categories on the ground that the slave is not, in the full sense of the word, a person. No longer can one say without arousing a shudder of moral horror: "For there is nothing in common between master and slave. The slave is a living tool; the tool is a lifeless slave." To be sure, Aristotle mitigates our shudder, for he immediately adds: "As a slave, his master's relations with him do not admit of friendship, but *as a man they may.*" But it is just this conception of the value "of being a man," in whatever other relation the individual may be placed toward other men, which is altering so profoundly a great multitude of the subordinate conceptions as to the right and wrong of conduct, that depend on the character of this idea.

The most important work of moral enlightenment and moral reform at present open to this line of influences is the correction and dissipation of race prejudices. This form of prejudice sorely needs the light thrown upon it which shall render it as intellectually despicable as it is morally degrading. Of all the social crimes that are most multitudinous and most distressing, the worst are those committed by the strong nations against the so-called "inferior races." Nor are these crimes rendered any less intellectually despicable when they are countenanced by a

pseudo-science of ethnology, and a hypocritical claim to an effort at "benevolent assimilation."

A third potent cause for the modification of ethical ideas and judgments about the right and wrong of conduct is to be found in the changes in legislation or in those subtle commands that are issued by the prevailing opinions *anent* matters of morals. The law may originate in ignorance, or be motived by greed, or subtly designed to serve the interests of dishonesty; but whether approved or despised by the conscience of the multitude or of the "good few," and whether somewhat scrupulously kept or quickly allowed to become dead letter, as law, it has no small or negligible influence. One must, perhaps, lower the standard of moral consciousness to obey it, or stiffen up the moral sense to justify one to disobey. In either case, one's moral constitution is, at least to some extent, altered in no unimportant way. In scarcely less potent degree is the point of fixation of some long-cherished moral judgment modified, or the smooth running of some previously determined habit of action interrupted, when the environment of current opinion upon questions of daily duty-doing becomes changed. The man who has his own ideas about the right and the wrong of conduct, and who is ready at any cost to stand by them, is not properly indifferent to these changes in current opinion. He should know them in order that he may the better know what, under the

changed conditions of others' views on things of moral import, it is still his duty to do. He was brought up to think dancing or the theatre wrong; the opinion of the majority has changed; shall he change both opinion and practice? His grandfather, the parson, used to take his toddy with the deacon, of a Saturday night, as a needed "brace" for the "effort" of the morrow; and when he was installed, the bill for wine or New England rum was the principal item in the expenses. Changed opinions have enforced changed customs. Shall the grandson take his whiskey, even if ordered by the doctor, "on the sly," and omit even wine, when he is dining a company of intimate friends?

The open criticism, secret contempt, and flagrant disregard of existing laws and prevalent customs and opinions in matters of truly moral concernment, are themselves phenomena of the most portentous significance. This is not simply because of the danger to the present constitution of the state and of society which the multitude who have taken these attitudes toward it would seem to imply. Where the active, living moral consciousness of the people, the feelings and ideas and judgments of large numbers of the individuals who constitute the state or the social whole, are in advance of this constitution, great changes in the latter are sure to come. It is better that these changes should come, in spite of the temporary suffering and even injustice which any consid-

erable change may involve. But how intrinsically grand is this power of public self-criticism in the light of new ideas and of higher ideals! How godlike is that capacity for it, which belongs to that one of the animals alone, who is not mere animal, but is also a person! To lift up ideas into a purer and more invigorating atmosphere; to clarify and energize ideals in the interests of better practical standards of conduct; to initiate improved estimates of the moral character of deeds and of men; — surely to achieve such results is to establish a title to descent from the Spirit of all Righteousness, and good hope of ascent to a share in the Kingdom of Righteousness which this Spirit is pledged to found and to sustain. As said Rothe: "He who does not unconditionally believe in the Might of Goodness in the world and in its final victory, he can no longer lead in human affairs — I do not say rightly, but even with lasting success."

And this brings us to a fourth source of changing moral ideas and judgments, and of improved and more vital and efficient moral ideals. This source is to be found in the spirit and the teachings of the few leaders of the race in the theory and practice of morality. We agree with Wundt in the opinion: "Man has always had the same kind of moral endowment." So, too, as it seems to us, man has always had essentially the same intellectual endowment. Neither in science nor in morality has any essentially new factor or

capacity been added by evolution to the human species. In both, his improvements are the enjoyment of the products of those countless past generations whose "natural gifts" were essentially the same as his own at the present day. But there have been men of extraordinary talents, and there have been a few great geniuses, in both science and morality. There have been a few whose insight into moral values, whose grasp upon moral principles, whose vision of the ultimate moral ideals, has far transcended the average of the men of their own time. There have been a very few who, in all these respects, have been the leaders, teachers, and inspirers of their fellow men in all times. What the present moral status of the world — what its judgments, ideas, and cherished ideals, concerning conduct, public policy, and the secret workings of the mind of the multitude — would have been without the powerful influence of these few, no one may confidently venture to predict. To trace the streams of living waters which have flowed from their personality makes ridiculous the mechanical theory of human history.

It is noticeable in this connection that of these greatest men in the dominion of the moral spirit, the majority have been founders of religion and teachers of religious truth as well. The names of Confucius, of Sakya-Muni, but above all of Jesus, arise at once in our minds. This fact suggests subjects for comment as to the relations,

in various ways, between what we call morality and what we call religion, — however we make our distinctions between the two. Such a subject demands some separate and more detailed treatment in another place.

But the ideas of ethics are not mere ideas, or mental images of real things and actual occurrences, revived in memory and reconstructed with an attempt at scientific precision by an act of the imagination. These ideas are, the rather, of the sort which artists construct; for, indeed, moral consciousness is given to dreaming, has no little of æsthetical quality, and tends to evoke many pictures of things the exact likeness of which is not to be found "on sea or land" or in any existing civic or social construction. This kind of work on the part of moral consciousness is no modern affair, or rare gift belonging to the most highly civilized or gifted races. It belongs to the human race, to the personal species, to man as a spirit and an artist of creative talent in matters of the spirit. And it is an historical fact of supreme significance that, even in the lowest stages of human development and among the most uncivilized and savage tribes, in matters of conduct and character a distinction is always recognized between what in fact is, and the idea or ideal of what ought to be. This is to say that, strictly speaking, moral ideas are ideas of value. The feeling of moral obligation is a binding to something which has a worth of its own. The reason

for this estimate of worth may, indeed, lie outside of the act to which the feeling is directed; but this reason carries with it the weight of *an obligation* only as it has connection with something which possesses a worth of its own — intrinsic moral worth.

All the different forms of disposition, and the deeds and courses of conduct to which they give rise, share in this quality of intrinsic worth. They all embody and express ideas that have value. They are the virtues or qualities of manhood which the man who is "true to the pattern" ought to have. They make up the separate items in the total weight, the absolute values, of the ideal personal life. Courage is the right idea of a man, in one aspect of his manifold nature and various relations to his fellow men. Perfect courage in all relations and under all circumstances is one of the ideals which has its own worth in estimating moral issues, its own weight in making up the balance of moral character. Justice is another such idea; perfect justice, its corresponding ideal. Thus each virtue has its own idea and its own special weight and worth as a moral ideal. Even when they are out of place, so to say, or are exhibited in exaggerated form, if they are intrinsically genuine, we give each virtue the weight and the worth which belong to all forms of the morally ideal. Hence the popular admiration — to which we cannot deny moral quality — for the "dying-game" of the murderer, for the

generosity of the corrupt politician, for the honor among thieves. Only the courage, the generosity, the honor, must be the genuine, virtuous thing which it seems; it must not be mere bravado, or the love of display, or a shrewd form of cowardly selfishness.

In the large, no other form of influence has contributed so much to the uplift of the race as the moral ideals of the morally gifted and ethically strong members of the race, — of the men

> "Who keep the ranks of battle,
> Who mean the thing they say."

This influence has been perhaps even greater through example than through doctrine or precept. Still we cannot deny all credit to those of the second and third rank who have reflected long and patiently upon moral problems and have put into words the truths they have found by reflection for the benefit of their fellow men. To study them as examples, to heed their doctrine, and to adopt their practice, affords, therefore, in part an answer to the problem of the man who is continually asking the leading question, What ought I to do? At the same time, the shaping of one's own ideals, and the estimate of the conduct and character of others according to ideal standards, requires great moderation and an unsparing culture of good sense. For, each person, since he is a *person*, has the right and is under the obligation to choose and to hold a somewhat special

moral ideal which he will aim to attain as *his very own*. To be the exact pattern of another is not compatible with that diversity of individuality which belongs to all development of the personal life. But to every one there comes the call of moral consciousness, and there is laid upon every one as an obligation the injunction to choose and to cherish moral ideals as they are revealed to him in clearer light and fuller glory; and to shape his conduct so as day by day progressively to realize them. In doing this, two virtues which are of such nature as to secure a sort of harmony of all the virtues, stand in the front rank; and these are Devotion and Fidelity, — both unswervingly directed toward realizing in life the weight and the worth of moral ideals.

CHAPTER VII

THE MANY VIRTUES

AS far back as we can trace the ethical history of mankind we find men not only making the general distinction between good and bad conduct, or between behavior which is to be approved and rewarded and other behavior which is to be disapproved and punished, but also dividing both kinds of behavior into subordinate classes. To these classes of deeds correspond differences in the qualities of manhood and of the individual men who perform the deeds. There is the good man and there is the bad man. But even the man who is on the whole to be called good, or who is conspicuous among his fellows for some one of the good qualities, may be inconspicuous or even deficient when tested by his possession of the requisite degree of other good qualities. He may be courageous, but not just; generous, but not truthful. On the contrary, even the bad man may, in part at least, atone for his badness in the public estimate by a brilliant display of some one of the better qualities of manhood.

These various qualities recognized as fitly belonging to the good man, as indeed the very

characteristics which make him seem good in the sight of others, are the so-called Virtues; and the opposite characteristics are the Vices, or vitiating traits that spoil or mar the moral reputation of the community and of the individual man.

If then we ask ourselves: "In what sense are courage, constancy, fidelity, justice, wisdom, kindness, generosity, better than cowardice, fickleness, injustice, folly, cruelty, and meanness?" the answer is: "These are the qualities which belong to the man who is of the true type, the man who is really good." And being one's Self "really good" means something more than merely being "good for something" in particular. We may then say, in a sort of provisional way, that the virtues are the habitual forms of conduct which distinguish good men from bad men; or — more abstractly stated — the qualities which when expressed in the conduct of life realize the conception of the nobler and better Self. Thus the Greeks used the word "good" to indicate the more manly personal characteristics — particularly, bravery in battle for the state and nobility of bearing. But their special word for "virtue" signified that which, for a man, is best. *Virtus* in Latin emphasized the same traits of good manliness. And where the religious idea mingled with the more purely ethical meaning, the bad man — as in both Greek and Latin — was called "smutty" or "black," and in Sanscrit by a word derived from "dirt." The bad man has in the

sight of the gods a much darkened and badly soiled character.

The idea of virtuousness is not, then, difficult to discriminate and to justify; but in the attempt to dcal with the many virtues we come upon two or three initial difficulties, which, though real, are not insuperable and are quite too often unnecessarily exaggerated. The first of these arises from the fact that in the history of man's ethical development the conceptions of the virtuous and of the vicious seem so greatly to change. Even at the present time, and at all times even when there seems little corresponding difference in the stage of civilization which the different peoples have reached, virtues and vices differ both in the public estimate, and as regarded by ethical authorities. So great not infrequently is this difference, that with whole peoples as with individuals the forms of conduct which one regards as most virtuous the other scorns as conspicuous for their viciousness.

Looking beneath the surface, however, we may come to see that this difference is far more apparent and superficial than real and fundamental. Indeed, we do not hesitate to say that, so far as we have evidence, always and everywhere, the greater virtues or qualities which characterize the morally worthy man have with two or three exceptions remained essentially unchanged. And if we lay emphasis enough on the title to be ranked among the leading, and the truly *greater*

of the traits of a virtuous manhood, we can probably merge these seeming exceptions in the general rule. The most patent of such exceptions as they appear to the modern and largely Christian doctrine of the virtues concern certain forms of self-control, such as chastity, temperance, charity, in the more restricted meaning of these words. But these modifications of the claim to a noble and commendable manliness, under which they are supposed fitly to fall, are dependent to a large extent, if not wholly, on changes in the economic and social character of the environment, rather than on alterations in the fundamental conceptions of moral worth. Some kind of self-restraint in the appetite of sex and in all the other more purely physical forms of desire has always and everywhere been deemed one of the requisites for a perfectly good man. Quite unrestrained lust, wholly uncontrolled anger, being *overcome* with drink or with greed, are not now, and never — to all appearances — have been, the qualities of a noble and admirable manhood.

The seeming discrepancies and even the violent oppositions in respect to the truly virtuous life are much modified, are indeed almost wholly done away with, when we consider how in fact and in momentary value the current virtues have to fit themselves to the changing necessities of different times, different occasions, and different opportunities. Always courage is one of the most fundamental, if not in some sort the most

fundamental, of all the virtues. As long as any kind of struggle, and of danger to life and other things of value are involved in the issues of the struggle, courage will dominate the very essence of the character of the good and honorable man. But the way the courage shows itself, and the character and extent of the demand made for the precedence given to this virtue among the others, will always depend upon a variety of ever-shifting conditions. It is not in times of the Trojan and other wars alone, that the moral consciousness of mankind affirms:

> "Whoso is seen to skulk and shirk the fight
> Shall nowise save his carcass from the dogs."

Now the emphasis put upon the kind of courage, and indeed upon every obvious display of courage, may greatly vary without at all displacing this particular virtue from its claim to lie at the very foundations of all true manliness. So, too, under that mixture of imperialism and feudalism which was developed in the Old Japan, as an outcome of the Confucian ethics, the virtue of loyalty may come to obscure and even to overwhelm all the other virtues that cannot be consistently evolved from it. In drama and in writings on morals and civic polity, this one virtue may be made not only the excuse but even the justification for many vicious deeds, for an immoral temper, and an unethical view of life; and yet the fallacy may be one of over-emphasis and thoughtless im-

moderation. For there is at least enough of truth in Aristotle's contention that the very essence of a virtue is to lie in a mean between two extremes, to justify our view of this matter. Loyalty is indeed a virtue, and one of the chiefest of the virtues. And like all the other most fundamental of the qualities of a manhood true to the supreme type, it may be made so to pervade all the other virtues as to impart to them some of its own glorious quality. But it may also be conceived of and put into practice in so inclusive a way as to submerge other virtuous impulses and deeds, and so to convert itself into a mother of vice. Among the Japanese, however, where in these later days loyalty has been most conspicuously praised and most splendidly cultivated, you are not likely to find any one who will not acknowledge the truth that justice, kindness, restraint of lust and anger, are essential traits in the character of the good and roundly virtuous man. Virtuousness requires many virtues.

It is testimony to the wealth of human capacity, both intellectual and moral, and to the variety of demands made by the claims of social development, that there are so many different virtues and that it is so hard to find for them a definite and scientifically satisfactory system of classification. How many qualities are there, in fact, which human nature may develop, and of which the individual or the social whole may make either good or bad use? How should we go to work to

answer this question, on the basis of unimpeachable testimony and in a quasi-demonstrable way, without attempting a complete analysis of the capacities of human nature, and then framing it in a setting as elastic as all the conceivable demands which future social changes might make upon these capacities? Neither psychology, nor ethnology, nor the study of history, has yet advanced far enough to guarantee the success of such an endeavor. But the case is not so bad for the student who would classify and examine separately the different principal virtues as the confession just made might seem to imply. Only, one thing must be constantly kept in mind. The many virtues cannot be considered as either separate capacities, or wholly separable motives and habits of conduct. They set limits to each other; and sometimes they appear somewhat stoutly and almost violently to oppose each other. Courage points in one direction; wisdom or prudence in another. We seem to detect in these conflicting claims the underlying demand that we should be both in some harmonizing way. Shall we express it by saying that we must always be wisely courageous or courageously wise? For the all-around good man seeks a harmony, not only of his powers for knowledge, but also of his capacity for virtue. Many-sided morality is as necessary for the great good man as is many-sided intellectuality for the man of a truly great mind.

The divisions, under which it is often proposed

to classify the right qualities of a thoroughly good manhood by reference to different classes of objects on which these qualities expend themselves, are more lacking in scientific accuracy and in practical suggestiveness in the case of the virtues than of the duties as studied from the natural point of view. Thus, to speak of virtues as either individual, domestic, or social, gives no insight whatever into the nature of the moral quality which we are exhorted to distribute according to some artificial regulations among certain persons in accordance with their different relations to us. But is courage an essentially different virtue when it is called forth in the defence of one's own life, or of the life of a child, or of the life of the country? Are justice and kindness essentially unlike personal qualities of a morally desirable sort, when they are to be exercised in defending our own rights, or the rights of friends and neighbors, or in granting the rights of the Filipinos and the Japanese? As qualities of human nature, that may go either right or wrong, with a quite complete disregard of the relation in which at that particular moment the person may be standing on whom they fall, either for his good or for his ill; — as qualities of human nature, it is only in the light of an analysis of human nature that the virtues and the vices can be so understood as to appreciate the weight and the worth of the ideal of manhood which their harmonious development secures.

It was Plato, who, in the uncouth form that belonged to the physiology and psycho-physics which he so often mixed up with his idealism, introduced the correct principle for the helpful division of the virtues,— helpful, we say, for the man who wishes to know what the virtues really are and what it means to develop them in the way of a practical answer to the question, What ought I to do? There are three cardinal virtues, Plato held; and yet a fourth which comprehends the other three in a sort of divine harmony. There is Wisdom, which is the cardinal virtue of the head; Courage, or the virtue of the heart; and Self-control, or the virtue of the parts below the diaphragm. Then there is a certain Justness, or right proportion, which results when these three virtues are combined in harmony to produce the really "good man."

It is the psychological principle, when given a more modern form and used with the explanations and restrictions already provided, which avails best to classify the virtues so as to make clear the particular nature and the relative value of each one. Let us say then that the most fundamental of the qualities in action of the truly good man, the so-called "cardinal virtues," may be divided into three general classes, according as they emphasize and express (1) good qualities of Will, or of the active aspect of the man; (2) good qualities of the Judgment, or the thoughtful side of the man; and (3) good qualities of Feeling, or

what is popularly called, the "good-hearted" man. But again, let us warn ourselves of the strictness with which the Self, in matters of conduct as in all other matters, acts as a unity; and that there is no good or bad act, in the higher ethical meaning of these words, which does not involve the whole Self,— so-called intellect, so-called feeling, and so-called will.

From time immemorial the man of *strong* character has been admired from both the ethical and the æsthetical points of view. When his strength has been expended in deeds of injustice or brutality, it is not without moral justification that the strong man, the man of great will-power, has been especially execrated and condemned. When his fixedness of purpose and ruthless fearlessness have been devoted to low and mean uses, he has been above others, and especially in contrast with the fickle but generous and good-hearted man, openly scorned or secretly despised. But if we can isolate that quality of will, which even these hateful vices exhibit in no mean degree, we cannot deny that it is the very foundation of all genuine moral development. We call the generous and kindly man the person of "good will"; but the man of self-control, of courage as against fear, and of constancy as against fickleness, is much better entitled to this praise. In testing this class of the cardinal virtues, Browning was quite in the right when he sang:

"Oh, a crime will do
As well, I reply, to serve for a test
As a virtue golden through and through.
. . . . . .
The sin I impute to each frustrate ghost
Is — the unlit lamp and the ungirt loin."

In pursuit of a further classification of the more fundamental manly qualities, we may point out that the three cardinal Virtues of Will, or forms of Self-control and self-determination, which emphasize the correct functioning of the voluntary Self in conduct, are Courage, Temperance, and Constancy. Courage is self-control in the presence of every form of the temptation to fear. Temperance is self-control in the presence of all temptations to gratify the appetites, passions, or desires. Constancy is persistent self-control in the face of resistance or obstacles to be overcome. It imparts "stick-to-it-ativeness of will" to every voluntary undertaking. The vices corresponding, as opposites, to these virtues of the will, are cowardice, profligacy, or licentiousness in the broader meaning of the latter word, and fickleness or sloth.

There is little need in the interests of improved morality to sound the praises of distinguished courage in the more obvious and spectacular of its many forms of expression. The soldier, the fireman, the miner, the driver of the locomotive or of the raft of logs down the rapids of the river, the captain and crew who remain faithful to duty

when the ship is sinking, or the men who quietly stand by and help the women and children into the boats, — all these and similar exhibitions of this virtue of courage excite today as much of moral approbation as such deeds ever did. And yet Crawford is right when he complains: "We are a cowardly generation, and men shrink from suffering now, as their fathers shrank from dishonor in the rougher times. The lotus hangs within the reach of all, and in the lives of many 'it is always afternoon,' as for the Lotus Eaters. The fruit takes many shapes and names: it is called Divorce, it is called Morphia, it is called Compromise, it is designated in a thousand ways and justified by ten thousand specious arguments, but it means only one thing: Escape from pain." But there is no need for encouraging the frequent revival of wars, or the riotous resistance to political wrongs, in order to revive the more universal prevalence of this declining virtue. There is no need even to heighten the already extravagant praises bestowed upon the daring athlete or explorer. Even savages need more courage for facing the terror of their tabūs, than for putting on another coating of war paint. The Hindūs need a great accession of courage, not so much for organizing a revolt against the Anglo-Indian Government as for facing down their own terrifying and debasing superstitions and the degrading slavery of caste. And in England and America, where cowardice and greed are the

most prevalent and harmful of all the forms taken by the unmanly vices, men and women urgently require more of the spirit which bravely faces and patiently endures hardship, disappointment, and loss, when devotion to duty require it. For loyalty to the moral ideal is better shown along the path of patient suffering, than by audacity in organizing a strike, or the promotion of a syndicate, or the conduct of a political campaign; — and it is scarcely necessary to add, in fraudulent misrepresentation or acts of sabotage.

Of all the cardinal virtues, that of temperance seems most subject to misunderstanding as to its essential nature and its application in the conduct of life. Defined, with due regard to its essential nature, this virtue is equivalent to the rational moderation of every form of natural impulse, positive or defensive, toward all kinds of good. The germ of the correct idea, the idea which best characterizes this sort of well-doing, and which suggests the kind of ideal manhood exhibited by its perfect development, is fitly given in the Greek word "*sophrosune*," a word for which we have no exact equivalent, but which may be paraphrased as a "healthy-minded, rational will." For the virtue, in this its well-braced and universally applicable meaning, we have (I think, unfortunately) substituted two quite subordinate divisions of the qualities covered by the undivided idea; and these are the virtues of a tempered indulgence of the appetite of sex as provided for

by the prevailing institution of monogamic marriage, or chastity, and the control of the artificial appetite for alcoholic drinks, in the form of a very moderate use or of a total abstinence. Accordingly, other forms of the self-control of these two urgencies of an appetitive sort have been relegated to the category of the vices; and in the case of those whose social organization and conventionalities differ from our own, the many other kinds of virtuous living which come under the head of the self-control of the good man are scarcely recognized as virtues at all. Thus, for example, a man whose greed has been most intemperate and productive of suffering and crime among others, if only he make display of some rather remotely connected virtue (such as a certain kind of calculated generosity) may be rated much higher in the scale of moral well-being than the woman who has lapsed from chastity, or the man who has fallen a victim to the vice of intemperance in the narrower meaning of the term.

Similar remarks apply to that kind of the virtue of temperance which consists in the control of the passion of anger. The emotion of resentment at all forms of seeming injustice, of invasion of the rights or unjustifiable restriction of the interests of others, is one of the most essential as well as valuable of human impulses. Without it there could be no sound constitution or favorable development of human society. In the lower

animals this passion, like the appetite of sex, has a biological rather than a strictly moral significance. But in no condition of lowest savageism is the self-control of anger lacking from the list of the qualities of the truly virtuous man; nor is the complete lack of such self-control regarded otherwise than as a moral failure or a punishable vice. Indeed, to justify itself at the bar of moral consciousness, the indulgence of this passion must take the form of the virtue of justice, or of a feeling supplementary to the virtue of courage. So the brave warrior in Homer "puts might into his rage," and lets "fierce wrath breathe through his nostrils"; and the ancient Scandinavian boasts: "I have walked with bloody brand and whistling spear." But even the savages of Central Africa have the moral good sense to see that "Ashes fly back in the face of the thrower"; that "He who injures another injures himself"; that "Anger benefits no one"; and that "He who forgives gains the victory."

Some motive other than the impulses to lust or to anger seems necessary, therefore, even in the sight of those whose social life has not been permeated with an intelligent conception of the moral and social value of their control, if anything approaching an unlimited indulgence of either impulse is to justify itself on moral grounds. Strangely enough the most persuasive of these fictitious grounds of apology for the vices of intemperate lust and intemperate anger are quite

too often found in religion. The *phallus* was worshipped by the ancient Greeks and by the Japanese of a generation ago; the *lingam* is worshipped by the Hindūs of today. The ancient Jews felt bound by fidelity to Jehovah to exterminate his enemies; religious beliefs and emotions of no tender kind joined with the political to carry on the Thirty-Years War in Europe; and the bitterness and unreasonableness of ecclesiastieal anger has even yet not been wholly expelled from the hearts of men as a prolific source of intemperate hatred and unreasoning strife.

Above all the cardinal vices which defile the souls of men and afflict the interests of man's moral and social development at the present time, we must probably put intemperate desire for wealth and for the power that wealth gives, at the very head of the list. Avarice, uncontrolled by essentially pure moral ideals and by the faiths and hopes of a genuine religious kind, is apparently more than ever in the modern world the "root" of every kind and degree of evil. Every other form of intemperance, as well as all the vicious emotions, is capitalized and dominated by this particular vicious lack of manly self-control. One answer at least is perfectly plain in the ear of the man who is asking the question What ought I to do? Fortify yourself against the prevalent and seductive vice of an intemperate desire for the acquisition of every kind of material good.

It seems almost a misnomer to speak of Constancy as *a* virtue; so much is it the very backbone of all virtuous and manly character. But then this is true in a measure of all the so-called virtues of the will. For what we call the Will is the summing-up of the backbone quality of the man. Every virtue in order to be a genuine virtue must be, so to say "endorsed" by the will; and in order to grow toward perfection as a virtue, toward its own appropriate form of the perfect virtuous life, it must be consistently and persistently endorsed by the will. "Consistency," says Lotze, "is demanded in conduct." "We demand that every single action be not at all times dependent on a hazardous struggle between character and the impulse of the moment." "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways"; and "Let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord." But the virtue of constancy is not, of course, to be confused with the obstinacy of a blind will. This virtue, like all the virtues of this class, must be kept walking in the light by certain of those qualities of the thoroughly and all-around good man, which we have placed in another class.

That man's intelligence, his powers of ideation, of reasoning, and of forming such conceptions as transcend the mere data of perception by the senses — for example, the conceptions of time, Self, and cause and effect — are invariably matters of supreme moral import, has already been made

sufficiently clear. We bear this in mind as we come to consider the qualities of the good man which have been classed as the Virtues of the Judgment. Among these we mention, as the most truly cardinal, Wisdom, Justness, and Trueness. In this consideration it must also be borne in mind that judgment is itself a species of conduct; that the making of judgments is in some real measure under the control of the will; and that the part which controlled judgment takes in the life of conduct is integral and essential. In a word, it is quite impossible for one to be a good man without becoming a man of good judgment.

So great and universal in all ages has been the moral respect for men of wisdom that this virtue seems entitled to take its place by the side of courage as laying the foundations for every sort of welfare, both for the individual and for society. Among the lowest savages the man who is wise in council is the running mate of the man who is brave in war. In the complications of modern society, for the inaugurating and promoting of that which is good, and for the combating and correcting of that which is evil, wisdom and courage — a wise courage, a courageous wisdom — are confessedly the qualities in greatest demand. Is it a matter of the government of children, of settling disputes, domestic or those which arise between employer and laborer, an affair of legislation or diplomacy? It is the man

who is both courageous and wise to whom others look with the largest measure of confidence.

To sing the praises of wisdom there is no need. Kings are saved by it, even if, being fools themselves, they are only wise enough to choose wise counsellors and to follow their advice. But there is perhaps greater need and greater difficulty to distinguish between the shams of wisdom and its reality, than is the case with any other of the truly cardinal virtues. This is especially so because several subordinate but important forms of right conduct flow from this fruitful source, the virtue of wisdom. These may be called the "prudential virtues." They are much praised, much in demand, but much counterfeited as well. How often is what is popularly esteemed as the virtue of prudence in reality only a form of the vice of cowardice! and yet we cannot deny prudence a place among the virtues. But the evil which the genuinely prudent man most foresees and guards against is the surrender of any of the cardinal virtues to the solicitations from self-interest, and the loss or the lowering of his moral ideals. In its higher forms, and as its supreme triumph, the virtue of a wise prudence prevents the individual and the community from wearing itself out in the attempt to break over the restraints set by an inexorable Nature to men's desires, and leads to a patiently wise acceptance of, and adjustment to, the inevitable. This is the benign virtue of a wise resignation.

THE MANY VIRTUES

Of all the cardinal virtues, in the intercourse of men with one another in the daily life under ordinarily peaceful conditions, the one which customarily bears the title of justice, but which I have ventured (in view of a more inclusive conception and a more expansive practice) to call "Justness," is at once the most imperatively demanded and the most difficult to determine. Just what *is just*, — this is an affair of good judgment which varies under an indefinite number of constantly shifting relations, and in the most startling ways from age to age and from nation to nation. Too big a "squeeze" in China is an intolerable injustice; in England any appearance of "squeeze" at all is publicly resented as injustice. But in both countries, and in all countries, many forms of the rankest offences against what reflection seems to compel us to hold flagrantly unjust go not only unrebuked but even unsuspected. And what *is really* just in one age and under one set of circumstances becomes *really unjust* in another age under changed circumstances. When we discover the ceaseless contentions over the applications and misapplications of this quality of good manhood we are not surprised at the cry of the ages as voiced by the writer of Ecclesiastes: "There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not." No wonder that this virtue and its corresponding vice get themselves classed as chiefly matters of good and bad judgment. In order, however,

that good judgment may be entitled to be called good conduct, and bad judgment may deserve to be called a crime or a vice, good will or bad will must be put into the judgment. It is this last consideration which enables us to see a little way into the essential character of the virtue of justness in its broader meaning. But it also brings out the truth how often

> "This even-handed justice
> Commends the ingredients of our poisoned chalice
> To our own lips."

By justness, then, we can only understand the spirit of fairness as it manifests itself in the voluntary judgment which duly apportions to men their share in the goods and evils of life, so far as these are dependent upon human conduct. Justice so defined comes pretty near to what Aristotle called a "kind of general justice" and which he reckoned "not a part of virtue but the whole of virtue," a "complete virtue, although not complete in the absolute sense, but in relation to one's neighbor." This fallacy of one "complete virtue," or single quality of good manhood expansive enough to include all the other good qualities, we shall expose at another time. We notice now, however, that such justness requires perfect wisdom, courage, constancy, and control over the malign passions and selfish desires, for its own approaches to perfection; and that, therefore, only infinite knowledge can enable a holy

will to be perfectly just. It is small reason for wonder, that this much-prized social and civic virtue is so variously estimated, so hotly contested.

Justness includes what theologians and jurists call "retributive justice"; and this kind of justice is no unimportant part of the cardinal virtue of justness. As says Lotze: "Retribution is agreeable to conscience; that is to say, the returning of a corresponding measure of reward or punishment to a will which has occasioned a definite measure of weal or woe." But only a trained and morally loyal judgment can even confidently guess at what is "a definite measure of weal or woe," or calculate "a corresponding measure of reward or punishment." And besides, perfect justness itself not infrequently calls for forgiveness and should always be tempered with kindness and pity. The value in which this virtue is held by the moral consciousness of mankind is testified to even by the crimes which are done in its name. The Javanese servant may submit quietly to fines and blows from his master, because he thinks them the appropriate thing *anent* the relation; but he will kill with a good conscience that same master if called by him an opprobrious name. And the "grafters," "white-slavers," and "strong-armed" thieves of our modern American cities are never backward about insisting on what they call the "fair thing" in their iniquitous partnership with the police.

Of all the cardinal virtues which we have classified under this head, that which we have called Trueness is probably most universally and ruthlessly violated. This is not, however, because its claim to be an important virtue is not recognized among the lowest in the scale of moral culture; but the rather on account of the extreme difficulties which attend its attainment and its practice, and the ubiquitous and almost unconquerable temptations to the various forms of the vice which is its opposite in the scale of the virtues. Even since the time of the Greek moralists, truth has been esteemed to be the virtue of the gentleman; but, on the contrary, falsehood has been excused as the necessity of the poor, the needy, the subject and dependent classes. "The man who rings the bell cannot march in the procession." "A poor man's pipe does not sound," say the men of Accra. "When a poor man makes a proverb it does not spread," is a saying among the Ojis.

> "O monstrous world! Take note, take note, O World,
> To be direct and honest, is not safe."

But "The liar is short-lived," says the Arabian proverb. "Lies, though many, will be caught by truth, as soon as she rises up," is the Wolof way of expressing the general experience.

The essential quality of Trueness consists in that attitude of mind toward the facts of reality which faces them fearlessly, sees them clearly,

and when duty requires or dutiful opportunity permits, expresses them sincerely as they have more or less clearly been seen to be. Taken in this meaning, the virtue of trueness is the very core of morally sound manhood.

The mind that earnestly covets the possession of this noble virtue, the virtue *par excellence* of the Christian gentleman whatever his civic rank or social station, will not be primarily interested in the casuistical and often sophistical inquiry, whether lies are *ever* justifiable, and what manners and degrees of falsehood are *habitually* excusable, on the ground that "all the others do the same thing"; but he will, the rather, seize upon the most exalted view of the nature and the value of the virtue with the fixed determination to make it, as a matter of unquestioned habit, his very own. His aim is to be a *really true* man.

The vices which oppose truth, and successfully thwart its best development, are manifold; they are all the more seductive because it is not so universally recognized as it should be that they are the chief forms under which the spirit of falsehood has come to shelter itself in this modern world. The number of men who lie through the fear of the lash or the gallows, or starvation, is relatively diminished. But the number who lie by way of false labels, false balance-sheets, and false representations in the interests of avarice, was — it would seem — never greater than at the present time. And here we are again reminded how

cowardice and avarice serve as the leaders in other forms of degrading vice.

But especially seductive are certain forms taken by the spirit of untruth which are much harder to recognize and therefore much harder to avoid. Of these we mention three: (1) Thoughtlessness, whether it takes the form of carelessness or indifference or sloth in the making-up of our judgments; (2) Dogmatism; and (3) Partisanship. These attitudes toward the truth of things are all essentially immoral. And they are especially injurious to the cardinal virtue of trueness, when the truths at stake are of the higher order, the great and eternally existent verities of the Universe, — above all, the principles that underlie and have the right to regulate the moral and religious and social life of humanity. About such truths *no person* has any right to be careless or indulgent of the spirit of the dogmatist or the partisan.

Trueness in the higher meaning of the word is one of the most unqualified of all the virtues. But trueness, as a virtue of judgment, requires courage, temperance, constancy, wisdom, justness, kindness, in its own expression, — whether the expression be in the form of speech, or in some form of action.

So charming are the Virtues of Feeling, such as kindness, sympathy, and the various forms of friendly affection, hospitality, generosity, and pity for the suffering and unfortunate, that there

is little need to sound their praises in the ears of him who is asking the question, What ought I to do? There is almost as little need to controvert the theory which once prevailed more widely than now, that these virtues are not "natural," are indeed only subtle forms of that overmastering selfishness, which varnishes what of seeming beauty and goodness it cannot quite subdue. For these lovely virtues are just as natural and universal and universally esteemed as are those of the sterner and more protective sort. Indeed, as we have already said, they are universally esteemed as having a somewhat special charm. When traced to their source in crude and undeveloped human nature, they are said to arise from the good heart, or from the viscera that lie lower down. They, too, like all the virtuous qualities require to be backed by good will and guided by wisdom. For although they are themselves full too often esteemed to constitute the very essence of "good will," they are rather to be classed among the virtues of an impulsive character; and they stand habitually in special need of guidance from wisdom. All of which, and much more that might be said in the same line, contributes to emphasize again the interdependent character of all the cardinal virtues. For wisdom divorced from the spirit of sympathy and kindness is no longer wisdom; and unwise kindness is too often real unkindness.

The one word which expresses the essence of

this class of virtues in the most inclusive and perspicuous way is the word Sympathy; and the nature of human sympathy has been much discussed by moralists of all times and of all schools. In its root form this feeling is best defined as the feeling of liking for (or special attachment to) those of one's kind. Something of this sort can be traced very low down in the animal world. To *feel with* the species — "like to like" and "crow to crow" — is a biological fact quite universally illustrated. In man's case, its more primitive and potent forms of expression are pretty closely confined to the relations of the family, or of the tribe; or to those peculiar relations which come under the title of friendship. Kindly feeling, and the merits of affection as a motive for good conduct, in these relations, are almost if not quite universally appreciated.

It is a mistake (which some writers have carried into their account of the ancient Greek and of the modern Japanese relations of the sexes) to deny the influence of romantic affection in all the varied forms and circumstances of married life. The affection of the most monstrously licentious and cruel of African chiefs for his favorite wife, even if she remain in his favor only a short time, is not wholly a sensuous affair. On the other hand, not even in the most highly civilized of European countries is marriage, and the domestic relations which it implies, with their corresponding virtues, based solely on romantic affection. In

no sense of the word, can "love" be the sole basis for a moral union of the sexes.

One of the most conspicuous and universal of the forms taken by the virtue of kindly feeling is hospitality. In the Greek world this high regard for hospitality goes back to the very earliest times. Among the Arabs it is still rather the most binding of all the virtues. To be treacherous toward those with whom you have eaten salt, or broken bread, or smoked the pipe of peace, is counted among the basest and most severely punishable of all crimes. Quite universally, the stranger or even the *quondam* enemy, when once he has been received under the cover of your tent or of the roof of your house, is morally entitled to protection and to generous treatment.

It is friendship, however, which everywhere and in all times both demands and affords opportunity for the noblest of the virtues of the good-hearted man. And this fact is justifiable on grounds of the intrinsic nature of all virtue as consistent with the unchanging character and the essential laws of the development of all personal life. For this form of affection is the freest from dependence upon changing relation, and is most dependent on personal character. To the friend, whatever the outward tie of relationship within which the feeling is confined for its manifestation, there is a spontaneity about service up to the extremest limits of self-sacrifice, which is peculiar to the feeling itself.

The deficiencies in the exercise of the virtues of feeling arise mainly from the lack of constancy; the mistakes from a lack of wisdom. But the limitations, within which it is held that the duties prompted by good feeling should apply, afford the chief concern to the student of the development of morals. It has indeed been said to (and by) them of old time, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." And when we get below the prudence and the pretence which characterize so much of our modern life, we find alas! that pretty much the same rule is secretly if not openly proclaimed to (and by) the men of modern times. Yet the chief characteristic of the progress made in this class of virtues is their universalizing. More and more it is accepted in theory, however imperfectly and slowly the practice is made to correspond, that the sympathetic virtues are due, as from man to man and irrespective of conditions of a less intrinsic kind. Respect for personality, — for one's own person and for the person of every other in the species called human, — is the rational and moral form of what is otherwise only, in fact, an animal and instinctive feeling of attraction to others of the same kind.

When we inquire what are the forces which have operated so to lift up and extend over all humanity the virtues of the sympathetic order, we must undoubtedly recognize as most fundamental that wider and more intensive intercourse which

has not only favored but in a way compelled the better acquaintance of man with man. This is, in fact, the increased recognition of the mental and ethical unity of the species, — no matter what biology or history may have to say about its unity by descent and in physical characteristics. Philosophy and art — the forms of thought and the forms of beauty — which emphasize and expound and express what is universal in the human, what belongs to man as man — have also been most potent influences in effecting this great gain to the theory and the practice of the moral life. But above all, those greater religions which have avowedly, in the teachings and examples of their founders, placed all men on an equality before God. Of such religions, Buddhism, but above all Christianity as the religion of Jesus, are entitled to the place of highest honor. But Mohammed, too, speaking of the right treatment of slaves, reminded his followers that "all Moslems are brothers unto one another"; and every human being might become a Moslem and so a brother. Even Hindūism, which has degraded itself below the other great religions by its immoral theory and practice of caste, can quote the Bhagavad Gītā in favor of "feelings of universal fellowship." Yet Wundt is justified in declaring that "humanity in the highest sense was brought into the world by Christianity."

In so brief a discussion of the nature and obligations of the many virtues it is not neces-

sary to point out that the commercial virtues of honesty, promptness in meeting obligations, and fidelity in matters of contract (qualities in the man of business so highly prized at the present time and in our Western civilization) are, as it were, secondary to the cardinal virtues of justness and trueness; and how courtesy and kindly regard for the feelings of others, and even the willingness that the other should, as the phrase is, "save his face" (virtues prized so much more highly in the Orient than among us) are the legitimate offspring of the kindly sympathy to which every man is obligated in his dealings with every other man.

For the inquirer, What ought I to do? two valuable injunctions may be taken away from even this inevitably fragmentary discussion of the various habitual ways of behavior in which the will and intellect and heart of the truly good man show themselves. The one is the general exhortation to devote our entire selves to the culture of the virtuous life; to fix the will courageously and constantly upon it; to train the mind in the knowledge of it, and of what are the wise and just ways of manifesting it; and to let the whole heart go out toward and into it, as a thing of infinite import and of priceless value. All this we may do if we will, and thus keep the first commandment. But the second is much the more difficult to keep. For it bids us somehow arrive at a habit of reasonable choices, in pursuit

of a sort of harmony, among the different virtues. It bids us be kindly, just, and true; courageously but wisely kind; hospitable and generous without encouraging pauperism; severely just, but by no means ready to exact "the pound of flesh." And who is sufficient for these things?

CHAPTER VIII

IS THERE ONE ONLY VIRTUE?

ONE of the earliest attempts to obtain a clear conception of the essential nature of Virtue is that Dialogue of Plato in which Socrates is represented as discussing this subject with the "Thessalian Alcibiades," *Meno*. The conversation opens with the question: "Can you tell me, Socrates, whether virtue is acquired by teaching or by practice; or if neither by teaching nor by practice, then whether it comes to man by nature, or in what other way?" But at once Socrates turns the table upon his interlocutor and becomes himself the questioner; and Socrates' question is pressed to the front: "What really and essentially considered is this virtue to which your inquiry as to the how of its coming refers?" Meno's answer soon gives the philosopher sufficient ground for the complaint that, while he has been asking to have "virtue delivered into his hands whole and unbroken," and has even furnished "a pattern" (of geometrical demonstration) "according to which an answer should be framed," the whole round of responses has amounted only to this: "When I ask you for one virtue, you present me with a swarm of them."

Can there be any other result than that which concludes the conversation of Socrates and Meno, when the quest for the essential nature of the virtuous is conducted in the same way? We do not believe that there can. For in our judgment, the many virtues (almost indefinitely many when looked at from varying points of view, as we have seen them to be) cannot be reduced to any one virtue sufficiently big to include them all. Doubtless this fact — if it be a fact — not only increases the difficulty of framing any theory of the completely virtuous life, to which every moral being must conform as to a universal pattern; but it also very greatly, at least on certain particular occasions, complicates the answer to the inquiry, *What ought I* (here and now and precisely) *to do?*

There is indeed pressing demand, in the interests both of moral philosophy and of the moral man, that we should discover some unifying principle for the many virtues, some universally applicable rule for the leading of the virtuous life. Both principle and rule ought to be definite and intelligible, if they are to serve the purpose which this demand seems to imply. Ideals that rise still higher as we painfully climb toward them; faiths that cling to the despairing soul, or to which the soul desperately clings; aspiration and longing that bow in adoration before the grand and beautiful imaginations which the future triumphs of moral perfection foreshadow when the world-to-come is so different from the world-that-now-is;

religious hopes with the comfortable resignation to inevitable evils, or that spirit of resistless striving against every form of evil which they engender and support; — all these, and whatever else of similar sort the enlarging horizon of man's moral consciousness discerns with increasing clearness, or foreshadows with increasing power, do not furnish us with any infallible test for the one quality of virtuousness which definitively qualifies alike all the many virtues. And so the man who really aims to be good, according to an outlined pattern of universal goodness, is always encountering some debate like this: "I want to be a brave and truthful man; but I want also to be a just and kindly and courteous man." Or, "I want to preserve a strong, even a passionate hatred of injustice, and yet I want always to have a tender regard for the weaknesses of human nature, and a pitying comprehension of the strength of temptation which stresses so many others in forms to which I am not myself susceptible."

What is this one only virtue, this quality of the really good man which somehow embraces and guarantees all the other moral excellences of the perfect manhood? There is no such lone virtue. There is no such one definable excellence of moral manhood. But our negative answer will be itself more defensible and useful if we add a few words to what has already been said in criticism of the several affirmative answers.

There are in general two ways of attempting to unify the particular virtues and so avoid the fallacy of which Socrates complained in his conversation with Meno: "When I ask you for one virtue, you present me with a swarm of them." The first of these identifies the virtuousness or viciousness of all conduct with some one feature or aspect of conduct. The second selects one of the more important and, so to say, penetrating, of the many virtues and insists on identifying all the virtues with this one.

Of the first of these two plans for saving the troubles of reflection to the man who is puzzling over the problem of what it is right for him to do, or who, having acted, is perplexed with doubts as to whether he, after all, decided to do just the right thing, there is need to add little or nothing to what has already been said. The good disposition of the good man, or his good motive, or his good intention, according to the several different forms of this general opinion, secures all that is demanded for the perfection of his virtuousness in all respects and in all forms of conduct. It has been admitted that without all these attitudes toward the life of virtue no title to have its reality can be maintained. But, on the other hand, no one of these attitudes compasses the complete nature of the virtuous life. Disposition that is not backed up by courageous and constant will is not all of virtue; intention that is not warmed with emotion lacks the loveliness of perfect good-

ness; motive that simply moves but does not move on to the issue in some wise deed of will, with an intelligently chosen moral good in view, does not describe the completed process of living virtuously and thoroughly well. And all these manly attitudes taken together only tell us how the whole man ought habitually to stand in reference to each of the many virtues; they do not tell us what precisely is that one among the many virtues which essentially includes them all.

The various attempts made in the second of the two ways for unifying the virtues is apparently the more successful; at least it must be accorded the merit of aiming more definitely at the mark which requires to be hit. Of these attempts there are three that are particularly worthy of consideration, both because of their intrinsic nature and also more particularly of the suggestiveness of their historical origin and of the social influences under which they have flourished most. These are — to choose conspicuous examples — (1) Aristotle's conception of General Justice, from which Plato's notion of a fourth virtue that is a sort of harmony of all the others does not greatly diverge, and with which the Stoical doctrine of the Greek philosophy and the juridical conceptions of morality in Mediæval and modern Europe are not essentially discordant; (2) the principle of Loyalty, especially as it reached its highest pitch of exaltation under the influences which adopted and modified the Confucian ethics in

feudal Japan; and (3) Benevolence as its doctrine developed under Christian influences and reached its more definite expression in the so-called New-England theology.

That all the virtues cannot be absorbed and described under any such conception as that of General Justice, the great thinker who proposed the term hastens to admit. Nor does his admission cover all the exceptions which we feel compelled to take. Aristotle's conception of general justice accords well with his own doctrine that all the true virtues lie between two extremes, in the position of a mean as it were; but this doctrine itself does not accord with all the facts; and so far as it does partially accord with the facts, it may be faced about and made to controvert the conception. For the very moderation which gives to justice its claim to be called "general" is the virtue of wisdom; and that justice may establish itself as actually *general*, it must be fortified and carried over obstacles by a courageous and constant will. Even those very customs and laws which the most civilized of modern nations have enacted in the interest of a more general, or even a universal, justice, are just now as never before proving how inadequate they are to this result, until they are largely modified, or in many instances totally changed, under the influences of various forms of human sympathy made intelligent and effective by the experience of the race. But to call all this reflective and

intelligent sympathy, — this compassion, pity, brotherly kindness, Christian love, — a species of general justice may gratify the desire to secure the appearance of scientific theory; but it throws no additional light on the nature of our fundamental ethical problems, and is of scanty or no assistance to the better cultivation of the virtues to which the good-hearted man inclines.

The attempt to compass all the virtues under the virtue of Loyalty must be looked upon in a somewhat different way. So long as the loyalty is directed by one person toward another person, or by one group or party of persons toward a definitively conceived end or cause, the virtuousness of loyalty is highly to be prized, especially by the persons to whom it is devoted, as well as by all who are interested in the success of the cause. And anyone who knows the hearts and the history of the Japanese, or of any other peoples among whom this virtue has continued to flourish in even a more debilitated way, knows full well how noble and efficient, whether the cause be good or bad, this one virtue certainly is. But he also knows what vices have flourished, and what crimes have been committed, in its name.

In the lands of its most imperial birth and most potent and irresistible sway, the moral principle of loyalty receives its crown as dominant over all the other virtues, only when it is conceived of and made the rule of practice in a quite definite way. For the servant, it means unquestioning and

unswerving devotion to the cause of his *samurai* master; for the *samurai*, the same kind of service ready on demand of his liege lord, the *daimyo* of his clan; for the child, complete submission to the will of the parent, with all possible measure of self-sacrificing affection; and for the wife, constant and painstaking effort to promote the comfort and all the interests of her domestic lord, her husband. But above all, and for all, it secures the willingness not only, but the eager desire, to serve the Emperor or the country, with a fidelity that covets rather than shrinks from any form of self-denial or suffering, even up to, or beyond, the limits of a painful death. Even as thus limited, and being limited made definite and understandable, loyalty is indeed a splendid virtue and is the mother of many splendid deeds.

Even as thus limited, however, this virtue is not, in itself considered, a single virtue, but one subtly inclusive of several others, which in fact it must include if it is held as a rule of life to be the fine thing it appears to be. It can, indeed, scarcely be claimed that loyalty must be supplemented by constancy if it is to be perfect loyalty; for the two words "loyalty" *and* "constancy" represent to our thought nearly the same attitude of will and heart toward a person or a cause. Yet even in this case, we seem not to speak words without meaning when we demand that the virtue of loyalty should take on the type of constancy in order that it may remain the great virtue

which it essentially is. There is not the same difficulty in distinguishing conceptions that forever deserve to be distinguished, when we say that loyalty itself needs to be wise, and tempered with self-control, and just, and prepared to have some sympathetic and kindly feelings toward other persons than those to whom our loyalty is sworn, and toward other causes besides the one cause that most of all elicits, and perhaps unduly or even criminally absorbs our devotion. For, we repeat once more, that unless tempered by these other virtues, mere loyalty, whether it be to a person or to a cause, and whether the person or the cause be good or bad, leads as surely to adultery, murder, assassination, rioting, and all manner of crimes, as it does to many admirable and splendid deeds.

Granted, however, that the person to whom we avow loyalty is extraordinarily wise and good, that the cause we have espoused is in itself most worthy, still the conception of this virtue cannot in the interests of clear thinking or right practice be so expanded as to include legitimately all the other virtues. As we keep on expanding, in order to inflate it to the proportions of a *one only virtue*, the conception itself, like a soap bubble, becomes thinner and thinner and more iridescent, until it bursts under the pressure of the matter-of-fact atmosphere which ever surrounds our daily practical life. This is what really happens in Professor Royce's "The Philosophy of Loyalty,"

in spite of the subtlety of thought and charm of style which belong to this, as to all the work of the same author. For when we inquire as to what, more precisely, is that one cause, to which if one is quite loyal, one has all the virtues and performs all one's duties, we are told that it is "Loyalty to Loyalty" (Lecture III). On this point of cardinal importance the author says (p. 129f.): "My thesis is that *all the commonplace virtues, in so far as they are indeed defensible and effective, are special forms of loyalty to loyalty,* and are to be justified, centralized, inspired, by the one supreme effort to do good, namely to make loyalty triumphant in the lives of men." And, again, taking the point of view which emphasizes what is obligatory as a debt to others rather than what is demanded in compliance with the special excellences of manhood, Professor Royce elsewhere (p. 139f.) declares: "My thesis is that *all those duties which we have learned to recognize as the fundamental duties of the civilized man, the duties that every man owes to every man, are to be rightly interpreted as special instances of loyalty to loyalty.* In other words, all the recognized virtues can be defined in terms of our concept of loyalty."

Now it is quite impossible to get the real meaning of these two theses — the one of which approaches the problem of the moral life from the point of view of the nature of virtue, and the other from the point of view of the nature of duty

— without carefully heeding this change in the conception denoted by the word loyalty? What is the real meaning of the second of the two loyalties which enters into both these "theses"? What it is to be loyal to a person or to a cause, we know pretty well. We know, or know of, a great crowd who cannot always be trusted for their constant and courageous and wise loyalty; and perhaps we know a good few who might join with us in some cause, to trust each other — every one every other — to the death. But suppose we call that cause "loyalty," what then do we mean; or, rather, what does the author mean?

This loyalty, to which we must be loyal if we are to do all our duties and exercise all our virtues, is implicitly, though not quite plainly enough expressed by the author in the first of the two theses quoted above. It is the one "supreme effort to do good," namely, the effort "to make loyalty triumphant in the lives of men." But this "loyalty triumphant" must be loyalty in the second and much the broader of its two meanings. By an easy substitution, then, we derive the one thesis which includes both the others and both the meanings of the word "loyalty." "The supreme effort to do good," and to make the same supreme effort triumphant in the lives of others, so far as they come under our influence, — this, it would seem, is the effort which in practice secures all the virtues and discharges all the duties.

But now we have the whole discussion lifted upon another and higher plane. From this more exalted point of view we see that a certain type of personal character and personal life implies an effort — and if the character is to be perfectly virtuous and the duties perfectly done, the successful effort — always to do that which is good from the moral point of view, that is, always to have the conduct morally right. And if we may change the word "do" to the much more profound and stirring word "be" — with the understanding, however, that there is no being for any person that is not doing, and that the doings of the person involve all his being (mind, and heart, and will) — then we are ready to agree that, if we have not altogether satisfactorily defined, we have come close to a much better comprehension of what is the very essence of the virtuous and dutiful life. But this is a very different, and a much grander and more worthy thing, than to achieve a technical resolution of all the virtues and all the duties into one big enough to include them all.

Of all the attempts to unify the virtues, that which would gather them under the word "Benevolence," or its more strictly emotional and religious equivalent, the word "love," would seem most entitled to credence. Yet when closely examined, it ends in the same failure which is experienced by those already examined. Benevolence (*bene-volence*) is well-wishing; and if we

always wish that which is well from the moral point of view, backing up our wish with a courageous and constant will, and guiding it by wisdom and the spirit of justice and kindness, in ways of trueness, — why then, of course, we are all through and through virtuous and gain the merit of having done all our duties. But to call this adoption of a term in so expansive a meaning a *bona fide* synthesis of a many-sided experience is to flatter the pretence of knowledge rather than to contribute to its reality. The same thing is true — and even more abundantly — of the theological phrasing which would convert all moral goodness into the "love of being in general." What is it in this "being in general" which should excite our constant and affectionate devotion? Do the "fowls of the air" share in this claim on our love, so that we may be bound to feel toward them as did Saint Francis of Assisi toward "our dear brethren the birds," including the crows that steal our cherries and strip our corn? Or must such affection be motived and sustained by faith in a Father in Heaven, without whose notice not even one of the worrisome English sparrows can fall to the ground? And are not the flowers and the stars, and even the snakes and the mosquitoes and the deadly microbes of a thousand species, also a part of the universe? Are they not all important fractions of that vague sphere, the so-called "being in general"?

What is it — we repeat — in this being-in-

general, or for that matter, in any particular being, toward which we should definitely direct this virtuous love? Is it the capacity for happiness, irrespective of the desert of it on moral grounds? In either case (Yes or No) we should be treating the Universe in a quite different way from which it, so to say, treats itself, whether it is to be regarded as under the rule of an impersonal Dame Nature, or of the gods of the heathen Pantheon, or of the one Father in Heaven in whom Jesus placed his supreme confidence.

Even more impotent to accomplish the task of unifying the virtues is the claim of a benevolence as conceived of in the narrower way and adopted, for example, by Lotze when he says: "It is not the effort after our own, but only that for another's felicity, which is ethically meritorious; — and, accordingly, that the idea of benevolence must give us the sole supreme principle of human conduct." For in this opinion some state called "felicity" is made the supreme end of all human moral endeavor. Yet the well-wishing which tries to contribute toward it needs as much as does any other one of the morally right attitudes toward it, the perfection which can only be contributed by gaining a harmony of all the virtues, or essential qualities of the morally perfect manhood.

And, finally, when we hear that magnificent summary of all the well-doing on which the highest personal well-being is forever and unalterably conditioned, it runs: "Thou shalt love

the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"; and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." "For on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." That is, a certain attitude of the whole personality toward all other personality is itself the well-spring of moral life, from which flow forth all the virtues and from which emanates all the rational justification for all the duties. As respects the practice which is to realize this attitude in the conduct of life its pattern is given in the exhortation: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in Heaven is perfect."

By a strikingly different process, and with an infinitely weaker practical power for moral rescue and moral development, the "God-intoxicated" Jew Spinoza found in the "love of God" the source of all knowledge, righteousness, and joy. This love he called "intellectual" in order to divest it of every trace of disturbing and degrading influence from the lower emotions. "He who clearly and distinctly understands himself and his affects rejoices, and his joy is attended with the idea of God; therefore he loves God, and (by the same reasoning) loves Him better, the better he understands himself and his affects." With such an one there can be no hatred, no sorrow, no envy, no selfish desire, — not even that God should love him in return. "God loves Himself with an infinite intellectual love." And in man's case, "the intellectual love of the mind

toward God is the very love with which He loves Himself, not in so far as He is infinite, but in so far as He can be manifested through the essence of the human mind, considered under the form of eternity (*sub specie æternitatis*); that is to say, the intellectual love of the mind toward God is part of the infinite love with which God loves Himself."

But even in the pantheistical conception of Spinoza, with its tendency to sink all finite personality in the gulf of an impersonal Infinite, the intellectual love of God is neither a virtue supreme among the virtues, nor a virtue which includes all the other virtues; it is a "power of the intellect over its own affects," which concerns "the mind's liberty, the blessedness of philosophic calm." For "*this blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but is virtue itself.*"

How different is that "love of God," which Jesus calls the fulfilment of all the law and the prophets, it is not necessary to point out in detail; but of it, too, the same thing is true. This love of God is neither the supreme virtue, or a "one virtue" among the many virtues. "Thou shalt love" and "Be perfect" are, the rather, *an authoritative summons to the passionate and determined seizure and tireless pursuit of the divine ideal of personal life.* They remind every person what is the type of the obligation which is dormant or enforced in his own constitution as endowed with the possibilities of a limitless moral

development. In the more tender and moving figure of speech derived from the most potent, comprehensible, and benignant experiences of our human life, these words say to every child of the race: "You are (potentially) a son of God. Become, then, in very truth a son like to your divine Father. To this work of realization devote all your powers of mind and heart and will. The ideal is set before you in a God of truth and righteousness and harmony of all moral perfections. Choose the ideal and make it your very own by a life-long, courageous, and constant — a truly loyal and devoted effort at its realization. This is the pattern of the perfect Self, the Heavenly Father of all men; as far as in you lies, make yourself like this Self."

Returning for a time from the terms in which religion solves the problem of a principle that shall unify all the claims of the moral life, we may summarize as follows the conclusion in which we have stated what we believe to be the solution of the problem in more strictly ethical terms: "The alleged unity of virtue thus becomes the fidelity of the one and total personality — the unitary being called a Moral Self — to the Moral Ideal. But this unity is subjective and lies in the nature of personality rather than in the nature of virtue — as though 'Virtue' could represent anything more than an abstraction from the characteristic tendencies and conscious states of this Self. For any objective unity we

must look, not to the nature of virtue, but to the nature of Reality." We discover, then, the only possible principle of unification of the virtues when we understand the complex nature of that unity which every person is, as considered as one of many like himself, as one of a society, or socially related number of persons.

Three objections to this view which finds the essential principle of the virtuous and dutiful manhood in the attempt to realize in oneself the ideal of a perfect personal life, as lived in actual relations with other personal lives, will probably be among the earliest to occur, the most persistent to recur, to every thoughtful reader. Of these the first is this: The ideal of personal moral excellence, which we must imagine to belong to the divine being, is absolutely impossible for finite man. To say that the essential thing for a would-be good man is to frame for himself and persistently pursue a type of living to which he can never by any possibility attain, is to start him off after the pot of gold at the foot of the rainbow, and to doom him to disappointment at the last, if not at the very first, of his pursuit of a morally complete manhood.

In answer to this objection, two or three considerations, among the many that might be urged, come first to mind. We recall the very beneficial influence, the enormous power for uplift and higher degrees of good, which belongs to all ideals; but in some special way, to moral ideals.

For the very message of the moral consciousness is this: "You ought to be better than you are, and it is worth your while at once to try." Without this message no moral development, no strictly moral life, would be possible for either the individual person or for a race of persons. It is also essential to the benign force of every ideal that, as it is approached, it rises higher and is still beyond our immediate grasp. The woe is not upon the man who does not easily attain his ideal, but upon the man who has no ideal, or who quickly becomes discouraged in its pursuit. To continue moral one must rise with one's ideal.

If the command were to be perfectly like God in knowledge, power, and wisdom, and limitless benevolence, to try would be folly, to claim success would be blasphemy. Or if anyone does not like to mention the Divine Being, under whatever worthy form of imagination presented, let him frame a picture of finite personal perfection in all these desirable qualities. For although some knowledge, some power, some benevolence are certainly indispensable for any degree of worthy moral development; the perfection after the pattern of the Infinite, of these qualities is not necessary for the pursuit, or even for the attainment, of the perfection of human and finite goodness. The ideal of perfect moral character in man, and of the conduct amid human affairs which progressively realizes this advancing and rising ideal, neither implies nor demands equality

with God. It implies and demands only the intelligent and set purpose to pursue this ideal, as a supremely valuable and worthy good, with that spirit of loyalty and self-denial, and of quick, wide, and effective human sympathies, which the enlightened moral consciousness approves and commands. Or, to return to the familiar figure of speech so potent in the history of all the greater religions, but especially in the religion of Jesus: "The true son of God" does not "grasp after" equality with his Heavenly Father; but neither is he satisfied to dream of a sort of absorption into the Infinite from whose unthinking bosom he likes to imagine he may have come. He aims at a development of his own personality, in the work of assisting others of his brethren to a like development, which shall make the entire family like the Father, — ethically true and perfected sons after the One Spirit who sets and inspires and cultivates the family type. And in this task of self-realization, he quite confidently believes he will not be stinted in time, unaided in struggle, or unforgiven for his failures and mistakes.

But against this all-inclusive duty and virtue of trying to "live up to" an ideal of self-development it has also been urged in objection that it is, after all, only a more refined type of Selfishness, — that insistent bane and hindrance to all genuine and lovable morality. The objection involves a complete misunderstanding of the view to which

it raises itself in opposition. For the Ideal which sets us the pattern is the vital Source of all unselfishness; it is the ideal of the Spirit, the spring of all the spiritual forces that struggle and suffer in self-forgetful ways for the good of the race. And every person may say, — indeed every true son of God must say, — it is the obligation, and the summing-up of the virtues, and the opportunity, joyfully, or at the worst tenaciously, to be held by me as a person, to follow, and to aid others to follow, this morally uplifting and beneficent ideal.

Once more, it is objected to this principle for the unification of the virtues, or, the rather, for giving unity to personality in striving to harmonize and adapt the virtues in the actual conditions of human life, that it is too vague to be firmly grasped by the understanding, and too elusive to serve for a guide to the conduct of life. For are we not trying to afford some workable answer to the inquiry, for each individual, What ought I to do? And how shall so general and indefinite a thing as this so-called universally imperative and supremely worthy ideal (even admitting its obligatory and supremely worthy character) assist me greatly in shaping my conduct sharply to the peculiar exigencies of my daily life?

But at this point we must call our attention, even more penetratingly and persistently than hitherto, to the mysterious *Individuality* of all

human personal life. This ideal, like all other human ideals, — scientific, economic, social, as well as moral and religious, — confessedly has only the characteristics of a type. And, indeed, if all persons were alike, in their moral constitution, ethical opinions, and moral practices, how could a community, a society, a racial brotherhood, or finally, a Heavenly Kingdom, be constituted and developed at all? *Individuality is of the very essence of personality.* Should two individuals become exactly alike within and without, by copying each other or some third individual, both would have lost their individuality, and neither would have become a true person. Have we not said that personality is a development, starting under conditions over which the individual had no control, but tending forward, under a growing but always somewhat closely restricted self-control, to the making or the marring, the perfecting or the spoiling, of *a* person, an individual Self? Two morally perfect good men would not be, could not be, in their goodness alike.

From the point of view of the moral Ideal, then, the practical answer to the question, What ought I to do? must be given for me in some such way as the following: "Make yourself *one* good man, in pursuit of such a form of the ideal type of the perfect moral life as is consistent with your capacities and opportunities." To be such a "one good man," one great thing, perhaps the greatest of all things, is that you should be de-

votedly helpful to others in their efforts to realize their own individual better selves. But be good to others in your own good way. Only make it after your conception of the divine type. Therefore, — we repeat, — for you, as a summary of the duties first in hand, and a promise of the virtues to be cultivated and brought to a harmonious development in the future, the insistent thing for the moment is that you choose some ideal of a Self for your very own; and then that you should devote yourself to the realizing of that ideal amidst the social and other conditions which are ordained for you.

CHAPTER IX

CUSTOM, OTHER LAWS, AND THE MORAL LAW

FOR the person who is constantly and consistently loyal to the moral ideal, as he conceives of this ideal in a manner fitted to his individual capacities and opportunities, the most puzzling and intellectually difficult of all his moral problems arise from quite unexpected sources. To be brave and constant in his high pursuit may have become to him a simple matter of course. That he is to make use of all his intellectual resources in the interests of the moral good of his fellows, and that in doing this he is to keep all his own appetites, desires, and lower ambitions under strict control, may long since have ceased to be a mooted question. He no longer even dreams of claiming "rights" of indulgence, whether of the so-called "natural" order or guaranteed by statute law, that are in themselves or in their practical working plainly for the moral detriment or moral debasement of society. The habitual temptation to lying, deceit, and the use of subterfuges, or to the practice of hypocrisy, has given place to a spontaneous and almost automatic candor, an instinct for

frankness rather than for selfish or cowardly concealment. Over all, and in and through all, the fragrant spirit of kindness is odorous, the genial shining of the spirit of sympathy shows luminous. This is, indeed, a pleasant portrait of the ideally good man; but it is by no means a wholly fanciful picture. There are thousands of human beings who, if they have not already attained, are striving with a fair measure of success in the daily effort to live in accordance with this ideal. And it is not the specific desire to commit a breach in any of the virtues, or to yield to any species of temptation, which causes them the moments of perplexity, the trials of mental strife.

The sources of such trials for men of ideals are chiefly three: and these are the Customs which, without their permission, much more without their express authorization, are dominating their social surroundings; the Laws, in the making of which they have taken no part and many of which have been enacted in opposition to their better moral judgment; and strange to tell, — perhaps above all, — the conception of the Moral Law which has been bred in them, or which has been worked out by themselves in the more solitary exercises of their reflective powers, or imbibed from writers on morality and religion. These three are the chief sources of the good man's perplexities.

There is one qualification which belongs to all

three of these sources of moral perplexity, and which makes their suggestions the more doubtful, their claim to control more galling, the more advanced toward the freedom of the ideally perfect life the individual person has become. Customs, laws, and current ethical conceptions, are all always and inevitably behind the best moral consciousness of their own time. Their conservative value cannot be denied; but neither can their power to place under fetters the soul that aspires toward the ideal of personal life. For this ideal can only attain its fullest realization in the environment of an ideal constitution of society. But the inquiry, What ought I to do? does not mean, What do I imagine I shall feel like doing if I ever get into the Kingdom of Heaven, after this Kingdom itself, the social Ideal, has fully come? It means, the rather, this: What shall I, a common and in no wise extraordinary sort of man or woman, do in this sad, actual entanglement, good with evil, always and everywhere (it almost seems "world without end"), of human affairs? The prevailing customs and laws do not answer my question. They are all behind the very best moral ideals even of this present still imperfect age.

Similar fault is to be found even with the current conceptions of the so-called Moral Law; and it is likely the good man must sometimes confess: "I am already troubled by the dawning in my own moral consciousness of the conviction

that I have myself been far indeed from conceiving aright the very nature of moral law; not to say that I have been holding to a fictitious summary of the features of the morally ideal personality as compassed by any conceivable form of stating or keeping 'A Law.'"

In the interests of morally right relations to the customs of the times, some things may be said without stopping for much discussion or careful picking of words. In all conditions and stages of social development, the prevalent customs, or ways of behavior prescribed for the individual by social conventions, are largely relics of a past, — partly good, partly evil, and mostly now become not quite appropriate as judged by a strictly moral standard. Indeed, not a few of the customs still prevailing in the most highly civilized countries have their origin lost in a remote antiquity. Springing from a superstitious belief in many gods, they remain to be openly practised but secretly laughed at by those who do not believe in any God. Originating in the churchly and Christian view of the sacredness of marriage, they are now sought after for the sake of social appearances by men and women who have not the slightest sincere intention of keeping the vows they were designed to enforce. In Old Japan the commission of harakiri was the brave and honorable gentleman's prescribed way of punishing himself when he had behaved dishonorably, or of immolating himself

in the interests, or by the express command, of the one to whom he owed the extremes of the virtue of loyalty. The custom still lingers with something of its ancient title to be an exhibition of virtue; but more and more it is being understood by the morally most competent, as in most cases a brave but horrible way of committing the coward's crime of suicide. The duel was in Mediæval Europe one of the several ways of appealing to a divine court for a judgment as to who had the moral right on his side in the issue of a mortal conflict. In the German army it is still in the grotesque and morally indefensible condition of being a sort of mixture of malicious murder and obligatory debt of honor; while the clearer eye and saner consciousness of the best of modern society looks upon it as a detestable form of crime, not even having behind it the motive of a genuine but mistaken sense of honor. But these are extreme cases and are comparatively unlikely to occasion any prolonged mental perplexity for one who is devoted to the realization of the ideal of moral personality.

With the great majority of the customs which daily greet one for choice to follow or to reject, the case is by no means so plain. Many of them seem innocent enough even after we have discovered that the significance originally given to them has largely or wholly departed. Shall I rise to give my seat to the woman who is standing in the street-car, when her physical ability to

stand seems quite equal to mine, and the conduct of her sex has robbed me of the conventional feeling of chivalry? I know that I am weak and tired; but I cannot inquire after the state of her health; for that, too, would be, however well-meant and kindly, an unpardonable breach of the customary and the conventional; it might even land me in the police court or in the city jail. I must be "punctilious" here.

The scrupulous man is always uncovering customs, to which the great majority conform, but about which *his* conscience is by no means altogether clear. As a corporation lawyer may I follow the methods in practice which made Senator X so famous? As a physician, may I adopt the code of professional ethics which justifies me in telling falsehoods to my patients when I judge that this will, at the least for the time, secure them against unfavorable mental disturbance; or may I, under any circumstances, deny them the right to make preparation — economic, social, or moral and religious — for approaching death? As a druggist, shall I deal in quack medicines; or as a grocer, in foods that I know are adulterated? May I continue to hold stocks in a company whose policy, in spite of my repeated protests, I know not to be strictly honest, however so contrived as to escape the law? May I shirk my work in compliance with the customs of the labor union to which I have pledged my support, or in compliance with orders

and threats of the ignorant and selfish youngster who is its acknowledged leader? When in Constantinople or Beirut shall I bribe the officials as the customary and the only way of securing a portion of justice; and on which side shall my conscience lean when making out returns for the officials of some home port? But why multiply instances? Daily living is made up of them; and the inner life cannot be withdrawn from their influence, scarcely from their dominance. To do, or not to do, as others do? — that is indeed the question, which is fraught with infinite perplexities and with no small perils to the soul of righteous intention. It is not so wonderful after all, that the most shallow and mischievous of all ethical theories has deliberately confounded the current *mores* with morality, the prevailing customs with the duties and the virtues of the truly regulated personal life.

But the truly regulated moral life can never be regulated from without. The sources of its commandments must be found in its own Self, however these sources may have been originally shaped by heredity or influenced by environment. What is customary can never be identified with what is truly moral. What others do — even if it be all the others — can never be made the final authorization for what I do as an individual person, a lonely Self. And this is chiefly because I can never be a strictly lonely Self. I can never take myself out of a Universe which must make

its last appeal to me on the side of the dutiful and virtuous life, as Itself moral to the core.

Now it is evident that the man who is loyal to the moral ideal can neither disregard — much less flout at custom — nor make custom his unfailing guide and the master of his deeds. And, indeed, no man is foolish or bad enough to do precisely this. For while most men do not like to make an open breach with the conventions that prevail in their line of labor, business, or profession, or in their social set, or religious communion, they are apt to plead custom as an authority when it seems for their private advantage to follow it, and then secretly depart from it when private interests draw them away. Thus does custom become not only the arbiter of righteousness, but also the scape-goat of many sins,—particularly of the social kind.

It is not possible to be really good and pay no attention whatever to the prevalent customs and to the obligation to decide in conduct for or against obedience to the behavior they impose. Each good person when perfected will indeed be a quite particular kind of a Self. If one pleases oneself with the phrase, one may say "I am bound, strive against it as I may, to be quite 'peculiar.'" Only a minority of folk, however, really enjoy being called peculiar. To be, or even to be thought, *peculiar* in this sense is quite a definite limitation of one's influence for good. To hand out good deeds in an acceptable way with

one hand, and with the other snub everybody for adhering to the customs of the day, would be to make one hand destroy all the effectiveness of the other. Almost every established custom is on occasion subject to criticism; but to be always criticising the behavior that custom has ordained is to doom to failure all effort to elevate the custom.

We will say, then, that the ethical idealist (let us frankly call him that) will succeed as his wisdom matures through reflective treatment of experience, and as his tact in matters of *mores* and related morality becomes more delicate and sure, in dividing most of the customs, which constitute so large a portion of his ethical environment, into about three classes. These may be roughly defined as (1) customs with which one may habitually conform with a good conscience by putting the right understanding and disposition into them; (2) customs which seem so essentially tainted with immorality, whatever their origin or original character may have been, that one must either quietly ignore or openly oppose them; and (3) customs which still remain on the border line, and with reference to which one's conduct must adjust itself perhaps in varying ways, according to varying details of circumstances or of the exigencies of the particular case. Thus, the answer of the man who is faithful to his moral ideal when he faces the problem proposed in the form "Shall I do as the others of the majority do?"

will sometimes be: "Yes, of course. Why not?"; sometimes, "No, of course not, even if others do"; and sometimes "That depends on circumstances, and what is your view about that?" In a word, the good man will make the keeping or the breaking of the custom a matter of humane and genial sympathy with his fellows; but he will never place himself under custom's control. And the more custom solicits him, because it is plainly on the side of his selfish advantage, the more carefully will he consider the moral quality of its claims.

The attitude of the man who seeks intelligently to realize his ideals in the conduct of his daily life, toward the laws, whether natural or enacted by man (common or statute) under all the existing forms of civic organization, is compassed about with problems, some of which are the same as, and others distinctly different from, those imposed upon him by the customs that form his social environment. Indeed, the distinction between custom and law as different ways of regulating conduct is not always perfectly clear. By "a law" we understand some "norm of voluntary action" which, unlike the customs of the country, is enforced by an express command and by a definite penalty or punishment for non-conformity. But there are many customs for the non-conformity with which both the warning injunction and the threatened punishment are quite as definite and sure to be applied as in

cases of failure to observe the provisions of so-called "common law." Even not a few of the regulations which have been for years hidden or only rarely referred to, in the statute books, have lost all legal quality. And indeed, there are certain classes of laws — for example, those regulating tariff, taxation, riparian and other similar rights — where time-honored custom has become a truly essential feature of the statute.

There are few conceptions less clearly understood, both by the so-called "scientists" and by the unscientific multitude, than that covered by the term *Law*. And what is it, indeed, to be governed by law, or — to vary the expression — to be under "the reign of law?" So far as at present concerns our subject, the answer may be given in something like the following terms ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 383): "Of all the several forms which the conception of law can assume, that which it wears within the sphere of ethics is most distinctly an affair of personality. Natural laws are indeed only the observed or the inferred ways of the behavior of things; the things themselves are not regarded as consciously conforming to the laws. The whole representation terminates in the mere fact that so the things behave. But human laws are objectively formulated rules, to which conformity is expected and enforced by an appeal to interest of some sort. Both natural laws and human laws enter the sphere of morality, and obedience to them

becomes virtuous and disobedience becomes a vice, only when the external expression of the formula presents itself within the consciousness of some Self as a form of behavior which *ought to be rendered*, under certain social relations, to oneself or to other selves. Thus the idea of an "external exponent," — to borrow the expressive phrase of Professor T. H. Green — is undoubtedly connected in the imagination of mankind with the sanctions belonging to most laws that are conceived of as distinctly moral."

It is customary, especially with those who hold the more purely mechanical, not to say materialistic conceptions of Nature, to regard man as inexorably bound by natural law, the slave of its resistless forces, the victim of its blind Will. If this is so, and if — this being so — we make thorough work with the conviction; then the keeping or the breaking of the "laws of nature" would be in no essential feature a moral affair. The man who violated or disregarded these laws in the most reckless way could not properly be considered, for that alone, either a foolish or a vicious man in the ethical meaning of these opprobrious terms. But as a matter of fact we do not *naturally* feel or talk in that way. We regard nature's laws as indications of how a man ought to act; so that, on the one hand he may keep on good terms with Mother Nature, and on the other may be, among her children, something more than a mere beast. And instead of man's

being the slave, the unwilling victim of natural laws, in those cases where the keeping or the breaking of them is most distinctly an affair of moral concernment, the individual is scarcely less free to say what attitude he will take toward them than to choose whether he will keep or break this particular social custom or statute law. We cannot alter the stars in their courses; but we can apply their steadiness or observed aberrations in their courses to the navigation of the ocean; and the navigator who does not do his best in making this application is not free from guilt of the consequences. We cannot change the relations between asphyxiating or combustible gases and the lungs and flesh of living animals; but we can change the greed and the carelessness that destroy the lives of thousands of miners. We have not yet succeeded in rendering innocuous the germs of typhus, or typhoid fever, or diphtheria, or bubonic plague; but we can stop the wicked pollution of water courses, the viciously ignorant and careless uncleanliness of our drains and milk cans, the lying in the interests of business prosperity that delays knowledge and blocks prompt measures of a sanitary and therapeutic order. Indeed it is the immoral attitude toward natural laws, even where ignorance renders conduct less culpable, that is the source of more untimely death and prolonged suffering than typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanoes. And when we add sloth, improvidence, and oppressive and selfish

government, to the long list of economic vices (*vices* rather than mistakes) we uncover the causes of the misery of famine; while the *righting* of the economic wrongs that disgrace our modern civilization is the principal present-day task of morals and religion.

On the whole, then, a man's chances of achieving goodness of the moral order, whether he secure many material goods, or not, are quite equal in the struggle with nature to those procurable under the common and statute laws of the most liberally civilized modern countries. It is rather easier to be a child of God under the dominion of natural law than a thoroughly good man by way of regarding all human laws as a trustworthy "external exponent" of essential morality. Indeed, human laws are distinctly not that. Trustworthy external exponents of morality, they never have been, and never can become. But the attitude of the good man toward the laws, whether he had anything to do, directly or indirectly, with the making of them, and whether he approve of them as wise or not, cannot be one of active opposition or defiance; this, as a general rule.

In the historical evolution of law, as in the development of social custom, the pace is by no means kept equal with that of the public conscience. In general, it lags behind; — and fortunately so, because the laws, like the prevalent customs, do well to act on the whole as conserva-

tive forces. But sometimes, a minority — not always of the wisest and best — by clever and unceasing agitation do succeed in forcing the laws to a point well in advance of where they can be sustained by the public conscience. Then, too, the essential elements of morality, which lie in personal opinion, personal motives, personal character, are either secretly or openly at variance with the law. Such a case presents no essentially different problem to the good man, whether the laws proceed almost or quite wholly (as in Russia) from an autocratic source, or proceed (as in the United States, so often) from a sinister but misguided plutocracy, or from an impulsive and fickle democracy, at times amounting almost to the rule of the mob.

With rare exceptions the inner law for the good man is obedience to the law of the land, even if the obedience works prejudice to his rights and interests only, without involving the destruction of his moral ideal. In general, it is better, morally, to suffer wrong under the law of the land than to do wrong by breaking the law. But where the laws are quite plainly oppressing and degrading the great body of the people, the good man makes his protest in ways that are at once, so far as circumstances make possible, courageous and wise; and he may in extreme cases join himself with others, in the name of a cause which is higher than all human laws, for their overthrow. By common consent, however, the right of rebellion

is justified or condemned, not solely by the motives which charity may assume chiefly influence those who engage in it, but also by the issue, in fact, which must be held to have a bearing on its justness and its wisdom. Where the remedies for bad laws are in the long run held in the hands of the citizens themselves, the uprising for the overthrow of the existing legal order can scarcely ever be justified on grounds of essential morality. In general, "sabotage" is distinctly immoral.

On the other hand, however, no person can reasonably or justly commit his conduct absolutely to the control of human laws. Morality must be self-controlled in obedience to the ideal of a dutiful and virtuous life. Shall I make unquestioning obedience to the laws the goal of my righteous endeavor, the ideal of my moral personality? Plainly, one cannot be a good man, in any form of human society, and be an avowed opponent and habitual breaker of the existing laws. But to make those laws the unlimited guardians and unrestricted controllers of one's conduct would also be to court the death of righteous personalities. He who takes active part in revolutionary movements can only preserve his title to high moral character by first of all purging himself of all dross of selfish greed and ambition. The flaming sword must be of the best tempered steel, forged for cutting down the fields of stubble in the heat of self-sacrificing devotion to the cause of humanity, but also well

shaped and skilfully used according to the wisest craftsmanship, the cleverest swordsmanship. Only such refusers at conformity to the laws of the land, or soldiers in the cause of revolt against these laws, can wear the crown awarded to all the martyrs of a purely moral ideal.

The origin of a universal formula for the regulation of all the conduct of life, and to be called "The Moral Law" (*par excellence*, as it were) is chiefly due to two causes. Of these the first is the intellectual desire or ambition to reduce to unity this important part of human experience; and the second is the mandatory character of those judgments which are enforced by the feeling of obligation, — or by the essential nature of the moral judgment. For as has already been shown from several different points of view, *moral* judgments are not simple statements of fact, of what actually is or of what will probably or quite surely be if something else is; they are always statements of what ought to be in satisfaction of the demands of moral consciousness, whether as matter of fact it ever has been, or is now, or is quite likely ever to be. Formulas of conduct that are embodied in customs, common laws, statutes, and institutions, do really and inevitably bind men as with "iron chains." And as Lessing says in "Nathan der Weise" (line 2755f.): "The superstition in which we have grown up, even when we come to recognize it, does not lose its power over us on this account. They are not all

free who scorn their chains." But it is only when we have a proposition which addresses itself to the sense of obligation as a rule of conduct to which the person ought voluntarily to conform, that we are in the presence of a *moral* law in the more appropriate sense of that term.

Codes of laws that have set themselves up to bind the will, not with "iron chains" but with voluntary allegiance in the name of conscience, are numerous and varied enough in all the ethical history of the race. They have existed in the form of tabū, of edicts from the trusted repositories of the public conscience, from the great law-givers like Confucius, Moses, and Mohammed; as voices from the gods or the alone God by the way of the oracle or of one risen from the dead, or the mouth of priest or prophet or religious arbiter and judge of what accords with the divine will in righteousness. But none of these, whether taken in isolation or in company, has ever amounted to establishing an intelligible and universally applicable formula worthy to be called, for all times and under all circumstances, *The* Moral Law.

If we make an inductive examination of all these codes, with a view to establish one law on the basis of the results of such an examination, we do indeed find a large and impressive amount of agreement as to what are most important and fundamental among the many forms of good conduct, — the qualities of a genuine moral type

which deserve to be called the "cardinal virtues." And by considering the "nature of the thing," — of the varying relations of society and of the effects of conduct under those relations, — we may arrive at something resembling the wisdom of the Stoic Emperor, Marcus Aurelius. We may arrive, that is, at a rather unusual ability to decide, with him, "What virtue I have need of with respect to it, such as gentleness, manliness, truth, fidelity, simplicity, contentment and the rest." But this is a very different thing from discovering by induction a law resembling the law of gravity, according to which we are obliged to shape all our behavior, which acts for its universal range and absolute sway without consulting human wills, and whose consequences can be predicted for the remote future with a close approach to infallibility. It is no wonder, then, that the one and all-inclusive moral law has never been formulated to the satisfaction of all inquirers on the basis of an inductive study of human history.

"Say ye to the righteous, It shall be well with him"; but "Say ye to the wicked, It shall be ill with him"; this in a degree summarizes well man's moral experience. But the repentance of Nineveh brought to nought the prophecies of Jonah: "The mills of the gods grind slowly"; "The power in history that works for righteousness" does not always "pan out" its expected quantity of gold per ton of mud; and the promises

which the prophetic vision offers to the eye of faith are very different from the declarations of a universal law. Besides, what the moral law ought to do is not simply to predict in a vague general way the consequences of right-doing and wrong-doing, but to give us a formula by which we may infallibly test what is right-doing and what is wrong-doing, under all circumstances and irrespective of time (*sub specie æternitatis*, as Spinoza would say).

The attempt to establish incontestably the moral law has, therefore, more than once been made in the high-and-dry *a priori* way, as an incontestable deduction from the very nature of moral consciousness, as such. That there is something unchanging about the underlying principles of morality has been the faith of all the world's greatest and most beneficent moral philosophers. This, too, has been the conviction of the greater poets and dramatists. Of these principles said Sophocles — to quote him once more —

> "They ne'er shall sink to slumber in oblivion;
> A power of God is there, untouched by Time."

May we not, then, by probing this consciousness very deeply discover in its depths the universal formula which shall satisfy feeling and intellect alike? No wonder that the heart of the good man leaps up with glad anticipations at the thought, or stands in reverential awe before the

product of the discovery when once he thinks it has been made. This profound stirring of the emotions before the conception, which Kant called "respect for the Law," is one of the noblest and most moving which can possess the breast of a moral being.

But in every case (and from the very nature of the case, it will continue to be so), when we come closely to scrutinize these claims to have discovered the moral law, and to have so expressed it as to make of it a universally applicable formula for conduct, we find that this law is neither what it claims to be, nor will it do what it is rightfully required to do.

Of all the attempts at formulating "The Moral Law" that of Kant is in modern times perhaps the most celebrated and the most influential, both in the form of its acceptance and of its criticism and rejection. Its author gives it the title of the "Fundamental Law of the Pure Practical Reason." By this title he means to claim for his formula exemption from dependence on human experience, and from all motive for its keeping except the one of "respect for the law." Indeed, in certain passages he seems to maintain that pleasure in doing one's duty detracts from the merit, if it does not wholly destroy the moral character, of the deed. This formula, as stated by Kant in one of its slightly different forms, reads as follows: "Act so that the maxim of thy will can always at the same time hold

good as a principle of universal legislation." But even a school-boy, if he will really think for a sufficient time, can see that the Kantian formula is a complete failure as an answer to the demand for the statement of the one and only and all-inclusive moral law. For how shall one know what "can always be" with respect to the application of "the maxim of my will" to other persons? And, indeed, even the maxim of my will changes and has to be determined by a great variety of changing conditions. At one moment it is "Be brave"; at another "Be wise"; at another, "Be just"; at still another, "Be generous and sympathetic and kind." And how am I, without divine omnipotence, to determine the fitness, the power to "hold good" for "universal legislation" of the maxim by which the wisest and most loyal of human individuals deems himself obligated in this or that particular case to govern his own conduct? Nor would the establishment of any system of maxims in the form of a universal legislation secure the perfection of morality in the individual or in society. For the essential character of genuine morality cannot properly be conceived of as the reign — even internally — of a universal law. Genuine morality is in the individual a certain type of personality. It is in the large a certain type of society composed of individuals loyal to this type of personality. And loyalty to the type does not consist in being precisely like, or in following precisely the same

maxims, or in doing on like occasions precisely the same things, as others are and think and plan and do. For that is true of God as the source of all righteousness, which the BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ says of the object of varied forms of religious devotion: "However men approach Me, even so do I accept them; for the path men take from every side is Mine."

We come back then to the same conclusion. A certain ideal of personal life sets up the judgment-seat before which all human customs, laws, and institutions — and even all codes of laws and attempts at the construction of a so-called Moral Law — must appear for their final testing. And the one thing which most unifies as well as energizes the life of the incessant inquirer, What ought I to do? is the choice, the constant uplift toward purity and perfection, and the courageous, constant, and unselfish pursuit, of this his own *personal ideal.*

CHAPTER X

ON SETTLING QUESTIONS OF CONSCIENCE

FOR the good man, the doing of his daily duties is for the most part wisely committed to the working of habits that have been formed some time since, and that act according to the well-known laws of this great force in all human life. The individual deeds follow one another in the customary order with little or no thought of their moral import, however great their moral importance may really be. To change sightly the point of view: The virtues of industry, honesty, fidelity, patience, truthfulness, and kindness are exercised as a simple matter of course, and without definite attention to the inquiry whether one is acting virtuously in any precise meaning of the word. Indeed, the pious say their prayers and read their so-called "lessons" from the Scriptures in much the same manner. They are not asking themselves whether they *ought to be* pious and piously instructed in the ways of right living. Their piety, too, performs its acts of devotion, and of seeking for guidance and comfort in the words of prophets,

psalmists, and apostles, without raising the question whether such things are ethically justifiable or not. This smooth running of the moral life, this doing of duty without deliberation, this freedom from the bother of settling questions of conscience, is a most fortunate state. Happy on the whole is the man who does not often ask himself, What ought I to do? but who without raising the question goes ahead (not headlong) doing what he ought, until he finds what he ought to do already done.

But all this *insouciance* or unconsciousness of moral import is quite as prevalent with those whose daily doings are of the morally doubtful or the distinctly and often horribly vicious sort. Bad deeds, like good deeds, are customarily done without reflection on their genuinely moral import, although their moral importance for those who do them and for the whole of society may be very great. Bad men, too,—meaning by this not those who have said, after Satan, "evil be thou my good" (if indeed any such there be) but those who are neutral or indifferent habitually to moral issues, — bad men, too, although they often raise the question whether the morally doubtful or morally vicious deed will be profitable to them, or not, act for the most part without raising at all the question, What ought I to do? They follow along in the courses to which they have become committed by years of evil habit. Indeed, under the influence of habit, one may

become largely or almost completely indifferent to the moral question, — an indifference which may perhaps end in the inability to raise the question at all. For, in general, those who have the most trouble over the settlement of questions of conscience, whether as respects the right thing to do or as respects the right of things already done, are those who are most loyal to the moral ideal. Such trouble afflicts the saints much more than the sinners, — if we may for the moment adopt this favorite ecclesiastical way of dividing men as a just manner of distinguishing those who are positively loyal to the moral ideal and those who are not. The genuine mourners over their own wrong-doings, the times they have missed and not hit the mark, are much more numerous in the prayer-closet than in the penitentiary. It is not the "cadets" and the prostitutes who are as a class most sensitive to the touch of impurity.

But for all persons whose moral consciousness makes any fair approaches to maturity there come times when the conflict of duties becomes acute; when the moral question has raised itself "above the threshold" so that it cannot be put down with a mere withdrawal of eyes and ears; or even when the soul must fully rouse herself to give all her powers to know what the right thing is and whether she will do that right thing as soon as it becomes known. Such a mild or more severe conflict, or such a real crisis in the moral life, may come at any hour through the

springing-up of some unexpected occurrence, or some sudden change in one's environment or opportunity, or some moment's call to do an unaccustomed thing. More perplexing, however, are those questions of conscience which arise, the rather, from internal sources and which have become questions burning like a slow fire within the bosom for months and even years of time. And all the while in our most highly civilized communities, through increase in the intricacy of all sort of human relations, through the multiplication of the channels of influence and the widening of their banks, through the very growth in knowledge of natural forces and laws and of the psychology of human motives and actions, "questions of conscience" have become ever more difficult of solution by the application of general rules or would-be universal maxims.

Casuistry is regarded as "the science or doctrine of cases of conscience." *Science* it cannot possibly be; not even if we apply this term to the field of ethics with as much latitude as must be conceded to it when we talk of the "science" of meteorology or sociology. And yet we are not to deny that the practice of casuistry is a truly rational and commendable sort of discipline. Excessive punctiliousness about the *minutiæ* of behavior certainly does not prove one to be exceedingly conscientious. Fussiness in finding and doing one's duty does not win moral respect. Before the greater conflicts of conscience a feeling

of the awfulness of the situation, its momentous consequences for the moral life of the individual person, if not also for others, is the only appropriate feeling. How otherwise than with a sort of awe shall we fittingly look upon Antigone when she risked all to decide between the duty prompted by affection to her dead brother and the duty of obedience to the commands of the king and the counsels of the wise old men? What other feeling than that of moral solemnity would have been appropriate if we could have looked into the soul of General Noghi, when this true patriot for a moment balanced the duty of living for his country and the duty, as it seemed to him, of joining his dead Emperor by the loyal samurai's path of hara-kiri?

It has all the while been made increasingly clear that for the good man in this life there is no escape from conflicts, — not only with his own evil tendencies and the moral and other evils of his surroundings, but from conflicts of duty that may keep the mind long brooding over them or may almost rend it by their violence at particular crises of its moral history. For every individual person — good man or bad man — such conflicts must in the last issue be settled by himself. Counsel he may take, and perhaps ought to take; authority in various forms may utter its quite legitimate voice; but the settlement of the issue, that must be the individual's own. For that very reason, however, a certain training in casuis-

try, or the methodical settling of questions of conscience, is no mean part of one's moral discipline; expertness in this discipline is a worthy part of one's moral education.

The grounds of moral judgment, the values of moral feeling, and the relations of duty to custom, law, and the generalizations of moralists, have already been discussed. These stand, however, in relation to the practical life of conduct somewhat as do the allied branches of science to a successful art. The art of right conduct, especially in respect to the practical solution of questions of conscience, depends upon a species of Moral Tact. But how to describe moral tact, like the attempt to describe the intuitions and feelings which lead the artist in any other line of art to hit the mark, furnishes a difficult or impossible sort of task. And indeed, the psychology of tact is by no means an easy subject to treat scientifically. Let any one stand before a great portrait painter and watch him as he deftly and quickly starts and carries forward his work of portraiture, and then try to write down a satisfactory account of what in the artist's mind guided and impelled the hand to its successful result. Or let any one attempt the same task with the skilful musician when he is improvising or composing in his own familiar art. The artists themselves would scarcely venture to tell just how they came to do what they did so well. We notice the rapidity and immediacy, combined

with a certain sureness and appropriateness of the effects, and we speak of that sort of "perception," "intuition," "insight," as a wonderful "knack," or "gift," or "tact," no matter how much painstaking study or arduous practice, with its acquirements of habit, may lie back of it all in the history of the individual's ambitions for the perfection of his art. *Trained intuition* may then be called "Tact."

In cases where the settling of questions of conscience seems to be something done instantaneously or, as the phrase is, "on the spot," the use of the term moral tact seems scarcely at all inappropriate. It is little less so when the settlement comes as the result of long and painful deliberation over the question of duty. In fact, in such cases also, the truth comes at last by a sort of leap out of the darker recesses of the soul, of the intuition of what is right, of the conviction as to where the duty lies, of the vision which is most apt to prove itself at some future time a truly prophetic affair, a genuine "thus-saith-the-Lord."

It will be seen, then, that the theologian, the priest, the moralist, or the man of experience in human affairs, who is not himself a person of genuine moral tact, — that is, a person with a trained and refined moral consciousness, — can scarcely become a trustworthy casuist. But good men and women differ more in respect of the qualities necessary for a high degree of moral

tact than in the sincerity and depth of their moral purposes. This makes the qualifications for settling questions of conscience successfully more distinctly a matter of education. For moral tact, like the ability to form with unusual rapidity, immediacy, and yet sureness and fineness, other kinds of judgment, is susceptible of cultivation; within certain limits it can be both learned and taught by example and by practice, in the narrower meaning of the latter word.

In the cultivation of moral tact four things are chiefly necessary. These are (1) sensitiveness of moral feeling; (2) insight into the motives of men in general and especially into the motives of those composing one's social environment; (3) experience as to the consequences of different kinds of conduct; and (4) subtlety of reasoning, or skill in the drawing of detailed inferences.

Disregard of the feelings of others and the consequent failure to interpret their actions correctly and thus to recognize and sympathize with what is good in them, and to help in correcting what is bad, is a fruitful source of much of the immorality of discourtesy. This form of disloyalty to the ideal of personality is peculiarly frequent and especially mischievous in the intercourse of the men of the Occident with the Orient, — diplomats, travellers, and even missionaries. With the average man, the foreigner lives just over the nearest mountain range, or across the next river; or at the farthest, just over seas.

With the good man of insight and experience, there is no human being who is altogether foreign. And in general, to know how the other "fellow" (expressive word!) feels is a most important element in determining the morality of all our dealings with him. For carelessness and vulgarity in our intercourse with others are perilously near the border land of vice, even if they do not lead one quite over the line into its forbidden country. Wisdom and Sympathy are the cardinal virtues in which the maxims of casuistry in such matters have their roots.

When one has to find one's path through a battle royal between conflicting calls to duty, the trial is often difficult indeed. We know so little as to the manifold conditions which involve the interests of others, and even less as to what the consequences of our action in either of the directions indicated by conscience may turn out to be. For to maintain with Professor Green and others that there can be no such experience as a real conflict of duties seems almost cruelly to mock with unmeaning abstractions some of the most serious and, indeed, most awful of the experiences of our actual human life. There is one consideration, however, which stands at the threshold of many of such conflicts and which may take the form of an important preliminary question of conscience. Our action has reference to others who must be the favored recipients or the unfortunate victims of what we decide it is right for

us to do. But this is the important preliminary question: Shall we do anything at all? Is it best that somebody should act, or that everybody should wait yet a while longer? Is long-suffering to be in justice no longer the course of duty; or is it duty to suffer in patience and leniency up to a yet somewhat distant limit? But if some one must act and act now; Am I the one — alone or in association with others — whom duty calls?

No moral law or code of righteous maxims can always settle this grave preliminary question. The question itself is a most frequent and subtle temptation to cowardice; it is, perhaps not much less frequently, an excuse for lack of wisdom. But there is one consideration which must always be borne in mind; and this has to do with the essential nature and the inviolable rights of personal life. There is a sort of sanctity belonging inalienably to the most degraded, vicious, and seemingly hopeless examples of the personal type. Its possibilities are not easy to limit; its resources of recovery are not always exhausted when they appear most clearly so to be; its rights are never to be in human hands regarded as in all respects and forever forfeited. Even as to the approaches of others with the best of intentions certain of these rights remain inviolable. It is only when this preliminary question of duty has been settled, whether by reference to domestic, business, official, or more

purely social relations, or by the impulses of human brotherly feeling and insight into opportunity, that moral tact, in the selection of the particular duty and in the manner of its performance, comes prominently into play. We have the right spirit, we know the duty to be done; and now we feel the way to do it most sympathetically and yet effectively. Ought I to do anything? Is it a matter in which duty calls me to take part? If Yes; then tact enables me to choose that part and to discharge my duty in it, in the best way.

In considering the sphere in which casuistry takes a most conspicuous part, we return again to a brief reference to the relation in which morality stands to custom. Here is the sphere, too, in which we may oftenest save our conscientious scruples by keeping aloof from all occasion for a conflict of duties. The servant of the Syrian king who believed in the foreign god, Yahveh, might be pardoned for making it matter of conscience when he begged Elisha: "In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing." But an American citizen of stiff Protestant persuasion, or of no religious persuasion whatever, if he has conscientious objections to kissing the hand of the pope,

or to kneeling in his presence, or to receiving his blessing, need not seek invitations to the pope's receptions. And, indeed, we can avoid a large part of the difficulty of settling *such* cases of conscience by keeping out of the society which presses them upon us. To attend banquets where wine is sure to be served may be at times a function which duty imposes on the total abstainer: if so, it is rarely his duty to take pains to make conspicuous his practice of total abstinence.

Among the more important and often painful cases of conscience are those when it is put upon us which of two persons, or groups of persons, shall have their seemingly conflicting interests regarded. In American slavery "days before the war," the law required that the citizen even of a free State should chiefly regard the property rights of the slave-owner; the dictates of humanity convinced the Free Soiler that it was his duty to assist the escape of the fugitive slave. In the war that followed, men's hearts were torn by the strife between loyalty to the country and loyalty to the state. The moralists have not to this day agreed as to which of the two were plainly in the right. But this was a question which each moral person had to settle for himself in his own right, — only, however, that it might be settled morally right, remembering that it must be considered and settled on moral grounds. Similar conflicts are constantly arising in the life of the family,

where so often the things due the wife seem to conflict with duties to the children; or what seems duty toward one child is incompatible with what, with equal clearness, seems duty to another child. In such cases the pious man takes counsel of God and of his own good sense, and runs the risks we all must run in a world where obligations are inevitably so conflicting, and where duty is so often not at all plain.

There is another sort of conflict in which the attempt to follow the moral ideal involves us; but which growth in the practice and cultivation of moral tact may make a vanishing quantity. It has already been considered as the inescapable result of the passage from that stage of moral development when the social surroundings impress upon the feelings the obligation to an unthinking conformity with their judgments as to the right and wrong of conduct, over to the advanced stage when the individual Self has come to form its own moral judgments with the freedom of an enlightened intelligence, inspired by more exalted emotions, and with a greatly expanded experience as to the values and the consequences of different courses of conduct. This is the conflict between the earlier but now obsolescent feeling of what it is right to do and the maturer decision of what is right on grounds of established moral principles. As has already been pointed out, the process of settling such questions is delicate and dangerous to the integrity of one's moral welfare. But it is

valuable discipline; and it is inevitable. The feeling of "the ought" (or of its opposite, "the ought not") must always be treated with great tenderness; but betimes it must be tenderly set on one side as a relic of the childhood of morality; and it must be continually trained into a rational and courageous loyalty to an ever-rising and ever-enlarging moral ideal.

Of all the questions of conscience which have occasioned most perplexity and have most distracted the moral consciousness of the individual good man, which have divided the schools of the moralists, and which have set quarrelling the opinions of the social environment, those concerned with the cardinal virtue of truthfulness probably stand in the front rank. Are lies ever morally justifiable? What are the correct substitutes for out-and-out lying by way of deceits, tricks of word or gesture, pleas that the end justifies the means, etc., etc.; — such are the topics that constitute no inconsiderable part of the treatises on casuistry. What ought I to do? — lie and cover up much suffering and even wrong-doing that the truth would surely produce; or tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," as runs the oath so frequently deliberately violated, and never in strictness made the measure of any witness' testimony in a modern court of justice. In a large number, perhaps in the majority, of the most painful conflicts of duty, the decision is made the more perplexing

because of the very nature of this virtue. In the system of virtues, so to say, the virtue of truthfulness occupies in important respects a quite unique position. It consitutes the very core of all moral manhood. It is the one last stronghold of the economic and social welfare of the multitude. It is the distinguishing trait of the honorable Christian gentleman, quite irrespective of rank, breeding to etiquette, wealth, or social position. It is the strongest bond of peace between nations as well as between individuals. "You have lied to me," too often means farewell to friendship between friends and between hitherto friendly nations, whose diplomats, commercial travellers, and historians can make that charge against each other. Moreover, the cardinal virtues of courage and loyalty stand on either side of truth holding up her hands, and bidding in her ear not to desert their side in the time of trial. But over against truthfulness as rival and inconsistent virtues so often stand the virtues of pity, sympathy, kindness, sincere regard for the interests of the innocent, benevolence, and even a sort of "general justice." Essential Trueness, however, is not simply speaking truth; it may often, the rather, demand silence, or the utterance which is almost sure to be misunderstood.

On the settlement of questions of conscience which involve a seeming conflict between truthfulness and certain other of the more important

virtues, we cannot do better than to quote at some length what has been elsewhere said on the same subject ("Philosophy of Conduct," p. 433ff.): "This brief casuistical discussion may fitly be brought to a close by a few words regarding one class of cases of conscience which has given the casuists of all times no small amount of trouble. These cases are those in which the duty of truth-telling comes into conflict with some other form of duty that claims to be equally cardinal, or even more fundamental. Here our view of the nature of morality does not permit us either to say with Kant that untruthfulness is always by its mere form, a crime of man against his own person, and a baseness which must make a man despicable in his own eyes; or with Fichte: "I would not break my word even to save humanity"; but even less to hold with Paulsen that veracity may be regarded as a form of benevolence and that lies may be told with good conscience if they seem likely, in particular cases, to benefit others. It would scarcely seem necessary to controvert the extreme views of Kant and Fichte, in these days when the utility of truthfulness is so emphasized by most writers when commending it as a virtue. Moreover, I have already indicated in what sense Trueness is a cardinal, an absolute virtue — not as the mere keeping of a law, but as an act of fidelity to the nature of moral and rational selfhood. Nor need we dwell long upon the necessity under which Paulsen (with every other

student of ethics who does not place this virtue upon its own secure foundations) finds himself covertly reintroducing considerations which his very conception of the virtue has appeared openly to exclude. For if the sole answer to the question, Why is lying wrong? is this: Because it destroys faith and confidence among men, and consequently undermines human social life, the other question soon returns: What about human social life is it that lying undermines which has the worth to make the happiness given by, and derived from, much lying, disapproved as inconsistent with the ideal of personal morality? In trying to answer this question we actually find Paulsen disapproving, on the one hand, of the theologians who deceive men in the supposed interest of the salvation of their souls, and commending physicians who deceive them in the interest of their bodily health or of recovery from disease!"

"When the conflict is on between the duty of truth-telling and the duty to exercise some contrary and opposed form of virtue, only the individual whose conflict it is can decide which of the two shall control his action. But the conflict must be fought out on grounds of duty, and the eye must be kept steadily fixed on the moral ideal. Otherwise, whichever way this particular problem of conduct is practically settled, duty is not really done, and the moral ideal has been violated. In most cases it will be found, I think, that the

conflict is not between duties at all. For example, if the question seem to be, Shall I tell the truth and be unkind, or speak falsely in a benevolent way? there are several questions that deserve an answer which lie still back of this one. Must I speak at all? Will the truth be really unkind? Will the falsehood or deceit be really kind: and if a kindness to this one person, will it be a kindness to society? And, indeed, am I bound to be kind in this case?"

"He who values Trueness at its own intrinsic worth, as belonging to the most essential qualities of rational and moral personality, and as situate at the very foundation of all social intercourse of the moral sort between selves, but who has come to the pass that he must either deliberately surrender this precious thing for only one moment, or else do a great wrong by way of injustice, unkindness, or other harmful conduct to his fellow men, is in a hard case indeed. He is in one of those tragic situations for the relief from which no system of casuistical rules, and no code of moral principles, can amply provide. He must settle his own case of conscience as best he can. But he must settle it as a moral problem — keeping himself free from cowardice, injustice, enmity, and hypocrisy or self-deceit. If he thus settle it, good men will commend his devotion to his own ideal of duty, and pardon and pity him if he seems to them not to have settled it aright. And what the Judge who knows the whole truth

will cause to eventuate from this human decision is in this Judge's hands."

"The struggle itself has its own value, although its place in the realization of the Moral Ideal may be a mystery hidden from man."

Counsel and a certain kind of authority have their important place in all the decisions between conflicting duties which confront the immature and finite personality in its attempt at self-realization under the intricate system of social duties and social virtues which are inseparable from the moral discipline of humanity. Counsel and authority are inseparable from the discipline which results in the acquirement of moral tact. But the spontaneity of a trained and disciplined moral conscience becomes the best of counsellors; and it is the final arbiter: but only when, and as long as it is kept open to that Spirit of all righteousness and love that is pledged to the moral redemption of humanity, and that perpetually summons all its spiritual sons to aid in its good work with the courage and constancy resembling its own indomitable Good Will.

CHAPTER XI

THE FINAL ISSUE

THUS far all our thoughts, from whatever point of view we have essayed to approach the main problem involved in the practical question What ought I to do? seem to have revolved around two profound, but complex and not wholly clear conceptions, in the understanding of which the final issues of morality are to be found, if they are to be found at all. These conceptions are embodied and in a measure consecrated by the words Personality and Evolution or Development. The former defines the sources, the meaning and the subjective influences, but above all the end, of the moral life. In the latter we should hope to discover, besides its actual external conditions and their laws, the material for writing a sort of descriptive history of this life. We might possibly gain, even for mankind at large, some pertinent hints as to its future. In a word: If we may know the nature, the values, and the goal of personal life, and also the ways in which this life is compelled to unfold itself, we have both the controlling ideas of a true ethical system, and the clews to a successful

method of conducting ourselves from the moral point of view. Thus all the problems of duty and destiny have their issues involved in the mystery of personal development. And this is true both for the individual and for the race.

When we attempt to speak of the "final issue" of any problem, as it is proposed for theoretical solution and for the control of practice, we do not use the words as though we were seated in the throne of Divine wisdom and foreknowledge. In some sort, no human thought or human endeavor can reach that which is entitled to be called "final," if by this we mean what admits of no further expansion or improvement. Science has not attained, has not even very closely approached, any determination of the physical, much less of the political and social conditions, upon which the moral life of the individual or of society is in an *absolute* way dependent. Ethics, as hitherto understood and treated by its most gifted and profound writers, has not yet been able to describe the for-all-time and under-all-conceivable-circumstances perfect type of the moral person. Even less has it been able to depict the details of a constitution, and the practical working of a society, which should be wholly composed of such individual persons. Nor has psychology attained distinction in the results of a definite aim to explore to their depths the resources, the right or wrong development of

which inevitably and finally fixes the issues of success or failure for the moral life as such. Least of all does the average man have any finished and absolutely true conception either of what he now is as being a person, or of what he may become in either direction by the acceptance or the rejection of his own best ideal of the moral life.

We may, however, correctly speak of the "final issue" to the attempt at answering, as best one may, all the subordinate inquiries under the leading question, What ought I to do? in terms of these two conceptions, Personality and Evolution. We summarize thus: "*The Moral Self in a process of Development toward the Social Ideal,* — this complex of conceptions contains the whole domain of investigation for the student of ethics. What is the essential nature of the subject of conduct, the ethical being of man? It is moral selfhood; it has already been described. But for every individual man, and for the whole race of men, conduct is some sort of a career; it is subject to the principle of continuity; it is a matter of history, and of the growth from beginnings toward ends, in the on-going of time; it is something which can neither be described nor even conceived of, except as the individual is regarded in his physical, and especially in his social environment. The principle of Evolution applies then in ethics; but in no superficial or merely external way. The Moral Self is a

life-growth, and so subject — although on its own special terms, as it were — to a continuous development."

When, then, we speak of the final issue to all questions concerning the right and wrong of conduct in this comprehensive way, we mean that the sources, the values, the significance and the end of the life of duty and of virtue — in a word, all of moral import — are to be found, and to be found only, in a just and adequate conception of the nature and unfolding of Personal Life. Do we wish a sound understanding of ethical problems? We must understand what it is to be a *person*, and to be one of many persons bound together in *personal* relations. Do we wish in any particular case to do our duty, or to discover what particular virtue is appropriate to be emphasized on any particular occasion? We must know what is becoming under just such circumstances for one entrusted with the capacities and responsibilities of a person. If we wish to be in the highest degree *good* men and *true*, our ideal must be that of moral goodness; — adapted, however, to the individuality which characterizes our personal development.

Still further: If we inquire, whether from the theoretical or the more practical points of view, as to the sources, the sanctions, the values, or the issues, of the moral life, we find our satisfactory answers, so far as we find them at all, and our suggestions looking toward the possibility of

yet more satisfactory answers, in an ever growing knowledge of that type of Being which we are prone to conceive of as the Perfect Person. All moral questions, if we pursue them far enough, *issue* in this inquiry, What is that type? And this issue is *final;* for there is no more beyond, or back, or outside, of it. When we have come to the limits of our intellect and imagination in pursuing this inquiry, there is nothing more to be done; no further work for either intellect or imagination to undertake. There are no sources deeper, no sanctions more obligatory, no values higher, no issues more important, than are those provided for by the conception of Personal Life in a process of Development toward the Social Ideal.

The ultimate Sources of moral life are in the person. To become a person at all, the agreeable feeling of the child, at being commended and rewarded for compliance with the conventional conduct of its social environment, or its obscure uneasiness at experiencing in some form a show of social disapproval and resentment, must develop the solemn judgment of obligation. This is necessary in order that the personal life may begin; and with it begins also one of the most important features of the moral life. With the feeling of obligation, and as an imperative condition of the development of the truly moral judgment, intellect and imagination must grow to the achievement of certain conceptions and

mental pictures which are quite beyond the possibilities of any lower form of life than that of the personal type. The strictly personal conceptions of a Self that is *my* Self and of a Self that is *some other* than mine, but with whom I must enter into personal relations; the conception of Time and a certain mysterious continuity of the Self in time, which has in my conscience and in the consciences of others and in the customs and laws of society, the strange effect of prolonging indefinitely the feeling of obligation as attaching to the individual person; a sort of doctrine of Karma or retribution, which is something quite different from an animal anticipation of the immediate consequences of action, and something quite other than an instance under the mechanical working of the so-called law of cause and effect; — all these, and other similar godlike achievements of an intellect and an imagination which break through and rise above the limits of the life of sensation and animal emotion, have their sources in the depths of personal life. They are the essentials of the development of moral life; but they are nowhere to be realized outside of a developing personal life. Only a person can know his Self as enduring in Time, and bound to bear the Consequences of his conduct throughout time.

More important and more mysterious still is that capacity for self-direction and self-development which begins as an obscure feeling, "I can,"

but which matures in the ability to make choices that, in not infrequent cases, affect all the issues of the moral life. On the one hand, we cannot overlook or minimize, whether in our theory of morality or in our practice, the influence of the conditions that are fixed from the outside, in the shape of inheritance and physical and social environment, over the unfolding of the individual's moral life. But, on the other hand, exaggerate this influence as we may, we cannot justly claim that it is everything which determines the nature and evolution of each truly personal life. A person is not a mere psycho-physical mechanism; such a mechanism would be absolutely incapable of originating and determining the issues of morality. Either the mechanical theory of personal development is false, or there is no reality to moral character. Confessedly mysterious as is the fact, unaccountable as the view may seem to make the doings of the Self (though, as we hold, not at all more ultimately mysterious and unaccountable than all ultimate facts are sure to be), the deeper sources of the determination of the development of morality involve the gift of the freedom of a person. Were this not so, did not the process of becoming a person involve the element of freedom in a manner and to an extent beyond the realm of the impersonal and the mechanical, then no such thing as an unfolding moral life would be possible for the animal called man. Somewhat sharper in intelligence than the

horse, the dog, or even than the man-like ape, he might be allowed to be; but such an intellect could not serve him to follow the career of an unfolding moral life.

What is true of the sources of the moral life is true of its Sanctions also. They, too, are to be found as ultimately issuing from the answer to the question, What is it to be a person? Moral sanctions are not to be found in the nature of things. The very phrase, "the nature of things," when considered as something completely separable either in conception or in effect from the nature of man, is a meaningless abstraction. No impersonal realm can furnish a monarch to give laws to any of its personal subjects. The "nature of things" may train men as it trains tigers and rats to a sort of prudence lest they be caught unawares in some one of the many traps which itself sets so ruthlessly for all living beings; but the nature of things could never produce in non-personal beings the beginnings, much less could it bring to mature development, the rational obligations of a truly moral life. We do indeed speak of the animal as being "bound" to this or that course of action by a sort of inner necessity;—as certain birds, for example, and the wild beast or the tame herd, are bound to the care of the young; or as the entire animal tribe acts *under* the so-called "law of self-preservation." But this manner of binding is a distinctly different thing from the sanctions of the moral consciousness, or the

rational obligations to obey a moral law or to pursue a moral ideal.

What is true of the sanctions of the moral life, as seen from the subjective point of view, as regarded by the moral being who feels or thinks himself under obligation to obey them, is also true when the same sanctions are considered objectively, or as having their grounds in reality. Strive to conceive of a Universe devoid of the issues of personal life; what resembling a valid reason for any particular manner of actions and reactions among beings driven by uncontrolled forces toward unapprehended and morally indifferent ends, can possibly be conceived as existing in such an universe? How can that which is irrational in its nature place, or have placed, its behavior on grounds of moral obligation? Planets are *bound* to move in elliptical orbits around the central sun; dual stars around a common centre of gravity; and the moon around the earth, — but not by way of awful respect and conscious espousal of the law in obedience to which they move. Feline and leonine animals of the larger breeds are *bound* to fight with one another; and all of them to prey upon the weaker of the same species and of other species. And, there being nowhere any personal life, who shall say them Yes! or Nay? If one of their number were to issue a mandate of peace and good will for the future; how without having himself developed some incipient but quite decidedly character-

istic traces of personality should he find himself justifying to himself the justice or the benevolence of his commands?

It is scarcely necessary to point out that all the particular sanctions to which men appeal as commending certain forms of conduct and forbidding certain other forms grow out of personal relations, and can be conceived of only in terms of such relations. Are there rights to be asserted, defended, or annulled; duties to be done; virtues to be cultivated and rewarded; moral blessings to be gained or moral evils to be avoided and punished; moral ideals to be framed mentally and practically realized; — all these, and whatever else has the slightest trace of ethical meaning, must find their justification in the essential nature of personality and the essential elements of personal relations.

All the Values that are ascribable to right conduct, in itself and in its consequences, have their final issue in the nature of personal life and in the relations which can exist only between persons. Beyond this life itself, there is nothing conceivable that has value or that can furnish any standard of values. Beyond the value of sharing in the highest and best of this personal life, there is nothing, either as a type of existence or as a continuous state, that possesses any real worth. "What shall a man give (or take) in exchange for his (personal) life?" To answer "Nothing," as though one were estimating values

in a comparative way, does not go to the depths of such a question. For, not only is there nothing in value to be compared with this life, but there is no standard of comparison outside of, or beyond, the issues of this life. *It* embodies all values in itself. If we take the point of view of him who put before us this question, "How much better is a man than a sheep?" after the question-mark we can only place the sign of infinity. So far as the sheep has any value, it must be stated in terms of personal worth. For we are not asking the market price of the two — of the sheep in the shambles and the human slave on the auction block. In asking the question, we are not simply admitting the superior, but rather the incomparable, worth of personal life.

But what is it in this personal life that gives to it its own incomparable value, and its right critically to estimate all other values, whether for purposes of theoretical comparison or practical acceptance and rejection? In answer to this question arises the debate of the "schools of ethics" — hedonistic, utilitarian, legalistic. To all these, Idealism in ethics as an essential and abundantly well-proven part of the philosophy of the Ideal, when such a philosophy founds itself on the experience of facts and the conceptions and laws which constitute the body of the modern sciences, is steadfastly opposed.

The history of morals has by this time ruled out of court the more gross forms of Hedonism.

The attempt to find all the worth of being a person, in the amounts and kinds of pleasure which the individual succeeds in attaining, has now become so unsatisfactory and even distasteful to all thinkers on ethical problems, that its detailed examination is scarcely necessary for the modern man who is raising in a serious way the question, What ought I to do? To tell such a one, "Get for yourself as much pleasure out of life as you possibly can," would either send him away disappointed and disgusted, or else reveal the fact that he was not asking the question conscientiously.

Since personal life is sentient life, and since man above all the other animals is capable of both happiness and misery, happiness for the individual man, as of necessity for all sentient life, is *a* good, is a condition that has a value which cannot be denied. Pleasure for the human animal is well worth the having; and with the human animal the price of pleasure, like the price of pain, may be very cheap. "Given freedom from disease" says a traveller among them, "and a slain antelope, and there could be no merrier creature than a Bushman." And if we wish to conceive in more poetical and fantastic way the supreme values of that mythical being, the so-called "primitive man," we may quote Browning thereupon: —

"Oh the wild joys of living! the leaping from rock up to rock,
. . . . the hunt of the bear,

And the sleep in the dried river channel.
How good is man's life, the mere living! how fit to employ
All the heart and the soul and the senses forever in joy!"

Now, in fact, neither the Bushman nor any other specimen of the primitive man leads "the life of pleasure" to any considerable extent; nor does he regard his duties or his virtues as either tested or fully rewarded by the pleasures to which they contribute. The savage, or the primitive man, leads in general a dull and miserable life. Indeed, crude ideas of duty, and extravagant and perverted loyalty to the virtues of courage in war and justice in private revenge, are the chief sources of human misery in the lower stages of moral development. It is not the modern civilized Christian solely who regards the individual person, when devoted to the securing of pleasure by all means for himself, with a sort of moral detestation. There is no tribe, or other social organization, that would not despise, and if power were given it, quickly exterminate such a despicable member of the social whole. The individual who makes pleasure for himself the sole or the supreme standard of moral worth for his conduct has always in truth been held to be not the good and noble, but the mean, bad, and selfish man.

But this bald form of Hedonism has long since ceased to command the countenance of theorists as to the values of the moral life; as has already been said, it never was popular and from the very

necessities of social organization and the essential features of personal relations, it never could be popular. The moment we try to modify it, however, while clinging faithfully to the contention of the main issue, we fall into difficulties which are no less real, although more subtle and concealed from the superficial view. For suppose that we introduce distinctions in the quality and nobility of the pleasure which it is our duty to seek for ourselves, and the procuring of which furnishes the best test of the success of the moral life. Seeking refined pleasures for ourselves, as a main end thought worthy, seems no less essentially selfish to the refined moral consciousness than making the aim of our conduct the attainment of pleasure in its grosser forms.

But there is another fresh difficulty now introduced. How shall one know what are the nobler pleasures? There can be only one answer. To test the worth of different pleasures, some other standard than pleasure itself must be applied. This standard can be no other than some one of the several issues of the personal life. Worthy pleasures are pleasures that are not beastly but are worthy of personality. Any value of a moral sort which they may have must be compared with the values inherent in the very nature of personal life. In this life, from the moral point of view, pleasure itself cannot be the thing of supreme worth.

Somewhat the same fate awaits all the so-

called utilitarian theories of ethics, when they are subjected to a searching analysis in the effort to find in them a rational justification for the sanctions and the ultimate values of the moral life. Here the worth of the moral life is found in its merely instrumental value, its ability to promote some more valuable good than itself is. Shall we then say that the morally best life has value just because it can perpetuate mere life, or an economically successful life, or a life of pleasure — to take again the point of view of Eudæmonism after having arrived at this point of view by a somewhat different method of approach? But just to live, and to live in comfort and commercial prosperity or amid artistic surroundings is not better *so long as one takes and sticks by the strictly moral point of view* than bravely, constantly, and with oneself in control, to live the life of truth, justice, sympathy, and helpful kindness and devotion, in all our relations with our fellow men. For we have not all along been deceiving ourselves as to the real nature of our question. We have not been raising and answering the inquiry: "How shall a man get comfortable and economically independent, if not rich, and so realize in his experience his full share or more of these confessedly good things?" We have been all along raising the inquiries subordinate to the main question, *What ought I to do?* And we seem to have discovered that the life which proposes to live in loyalty to the

answer to this question, — that is, *the truly moral life*, — is itself something well worth while. That *this* life has value, and a great deal of value, a species of value that is unique and supreme, — this has been the fine discovery which we have made, the treasure-trove we have unearthed; and we are not going to throw it away, or *cache* it, or surrender it to the first argument for a contesting claim. Indeed, as judged by every profoundest argument, as tested by every most conclusive process of analysis, and as weighed in the truest and most delicate scale of judgment, just to lead this moral life, because it is the only kind of life worthy of a person, appears to us the thing best worth our All to do. In a word, the values of personal life are at their highest as set before us in

> " . . . all our rarer, better, truer self,
> That sobbed religiously in yearning song,
> That watched to ease the burden of the world,
> Laboriously tracing what must be,
> And what may yet be better."

How, indeed, can there be anything better worth living for than just the living of this kind of personal life?

The moral life, therefore, cannot have its End or Final Purpose in anything above or beyond itself. Its end is in itself; when this is reached, however the path toward this end may lie through pain and struggle, the final purpose of personal development has been fully realized. To be

good, in the ethical meaning of the word, is the end-all of getting, and using, and enjoying goods of every other kind. For the perfection of the moral life, of the life of duty and virtue and courageous and constant loyalty to the moral ideal, is the expression of the total meaning, and the only complete attainment, of the worthiest and most exalted issues of personality. When we ask, whether flippantly or thoughtfully, "What is the use and what the reward of pursuing, and of winning in the pursuit of this ideal?" we ask a meaningless question. Its usefulness sets the standard for all other uses; the reward for its attainment is the ineffable but eternally valuable riches. Of it we may say that it is

> "Inviolate, unvaried,
> Divinest, sweetest, best."

Such rhapsodic but quite justifiable praises of the value of the moral ideal, as crowning the values and defining the ultimate issue of being a real person, do not deprive happiness of all claim to be worth having for ourselves and contributing to others. Our view does not diminish the worth of good conduct or its obvious usefulness by way of increasing comfortable living or securing the results of a genuine economic prosperity. Such questions as the following remain quite as pertinent as before. Is not happiness a valuable and even essential condition of the development of the best personal life, both of the individual

and of society? Has not happiness a certain value of its own? Were dutiful and virtuous living a sure means to bring about the extinction of the human race, where would the obligation to such a life for the individual or for the multitude find its reliable ground of standing?

We may answer all these and other similar questions with affirmations and concessions, without in the least diminishing the reasons on which we rely for rejecting every possible form of Eudæmonism and Utilitarianism in ethics. From the point of view of the truly moral life — its sanctions, its values, and the ideal which marks its final purpose, the last goal in its race-course — happiness, however intimately associated with morality, is secondary, subsidiary, and worth while only as cause and consequent of personal development. Usefulness is indeed demanded as the measure of the reality and the value of the moral life. But not even the happiness of others, and of those nearest and dearest to him, can be made the supreme motive and measure of the good man's conduct; nor can his success in ministering to this happiness be the good man's highest reward. For in proportion as he desires for others, as for himself and even more abundantly, the choicest rewards and noblest issues of the personal life, he will wish for them what he has learned to accept for himself, only such happiness, in kind and amount, as is the fit accompaniment and legitimate result of leading the moral life amidst the difficult and

painful conditions of man's present physical and social environment from which there is no escape. And indeed, in this environment at present there is, and so far as we can see candidly into the future there always will be, an immense amount of suffering and struggle exacted as the price of attaining, or even approaching, the perfection of personal life.

All this it is popular to recognize. The stage, as well as the pulpit, preaches the nobility of heroic endurance. Wise parents, and tender as well as wise, in all stages of social development and all classes of society, have trained their offspring not to think of pleasure more highly than they *ought to* think. And when moral philosophy undertakes the problem of making distinctions of value in the kinds of pleasure, or happiness, it finds no place to stop until it descries a fine blend of all the values of personal life in the "blessedness of righteousness."

We return then to the thesis from which it seems to us there is no departure possible for him who finds his daily personal question in the form, What am I to do? while seeking its final issue by groping for the last words that can be said about the sources, the sanctions, the values, and the ultimate meaning of the moral life. All these questions finally merge themselves, and are lost but only to be found again, in the conception of personality. The practical outcome of this search for the *final issue* of the moral problem is the

exhortation: "You have a chance to become a real person after the type of the perfect person; Seize that chance." Or, to throw the exhortation into the hearty and inspiring language of the naïve but grandly truthful religious consciousness: "You have a call and an opportunity to become a 'son of God' after the likeness of the Heavenly Father." Improve the opportunity; hold it fast; make it the goal of your life's endeavor.

For the individual, then, all the associated values of happiness, beauty, and truth, while they may not be identified with the value of goodness, seem in some sort to be subordinated and contributory to it. Or, should we not the rather say, that they contend for place under its headship in a kind of harmony which cannot be realized amidst present conditions of human living, but which seems dimly to anticipate some "far-off divine event?"

But is the essence of morality to be found in seeking this harmony for oneself alone? The question is one that falls apart as self-contradictory or vanishes into the thin air of absurdity, the moment its meaning is made clear. The individuality of personality is no such simple affair, is no *mere* individuality; an *alone* "person" cannot exist or even be imagined. Just as truly as there is no society of persons that is not constituted of individual persons; just so truly can no individual person be constituted or developed except as in and of a society made up of persons. The power-

ful factors of heredity and the strong and so often determining influences of environment and training come from other persons than the individual Self. The duties of the moral life all imply relations with other selves. The virtues are social excellences. The very arousement of the idea — not to say, the ideal — of duty implies social obligation. The absolutely lone person, if he could void his mind completely of all attribution of personal qualifications to the Universe, and could absolutely blot out every image of unseen personal life, would have no field for the cultivation or the exercise of the virtues. It is difficult to see how he could form the faintest conception of what it is to be a virtue.

But more obvious and more important still: The values of the moral life for any individual are realizable only in their effect upon the social whole; the moral attitude is directed toward the good of society; the ultimate goal for all individual persons is the progressive attainment of the social ideal. Of this hope the "beacons" are the men who

> " . . . fill up the gaps in the files,
> Strengthen the wavering hands,
> 'Stablish, continue the march."

The very obvious and important nature of this truth, however, may well cause us to hesitate before much that seems just now inseparably connected with the invitation to so-called "social service," and with the means that are so enthusi-

astically employed to secure so-called "social reform." Social service is comparatively valueless and ineffective for social reform unless it is initiated and carried on with the goodwill and the wisdom and regard for justice that characterize the life developing in pursuance of the moral ideal. Morally good individuals are the only persons to be trusted in efforts for social service; morally good individuals are the only constituents of a truly reformed society. And any country or community which does not produce in goodly numbers such individuals can never be made into a morally worthy social whole. Social reform can not be accomplished in the lump. God himself takes a long time and an immense amount of pains to make even one good man. Salvation does not come either to the individual or to the social whole, by way of the multiplication of societies; and there are already with us an excessive number of officers and servants of such societies — too many of whom are abstracted from the percentage of the population that is producing anything really good.

In speaking further of the *final issue* of the moral life we need only refer to the whole swarm of important considerations which are embodied in the other of the two words chosen for our guiding conceptions in all the preceding Chapters. This was the word Evolution or Development. Some of the factors which determine the course and the laws of the evolution of the moral life

have their correspondents and analogues in other fields of science or of daily experience. The moral life is subject of investigation from the biological point of view; or from the point of view taken by the student of economic development. More especially is the evolution of moral life a study for the expert in the history of the customs that are called *mores;* but especially for the one who knows the fundamental truths of psychology as viewed from the developmental point of view. But in some respects, and these the most important of all respects, the evolution of the moral life is quite unique. Its unique features — such as the feeling "I ought," the feeling "I can," and the moral ideal have, however, already been sufficiently described. It remains chiefly to insist upon the fact that the moral life *is* a development, and can only be comprehended or lived as such. It implies growth, slow growth; it takes time, much time; it suffers from neglect, suffers much from any neglect; it has its ever variegated and changing ideals, but a certain fixity of type. They who would secure its values, and achieve its goal, must pay the price; the price is large, and the more you pay on it, the more pay is still demanded; but payment becomes more easy and even joyful. What faiths and hopes may help the soul that is pursuing the moral problem to the final issue will be suggested in the following and last Chapter.

CHAPTER XII

MORALITY AND RELIGION

TOUCHING the relations which exist between the nature and development of moral ideals and the belief in, and worship of, invisible personal powers; and touching the separate or joint influence of both on the conduct of life; there have been two extreme opinions held by writers on morality and religion. On the one hand, some have affirmed the complete identity of the two; but on the other hand, some have advocated their complete separability. Neither of these extremes can stand the test of psychological analysis or of the history of man's moral and religious development. Neither of them answers satisfactorily the facts of the individual's profoundest and inmost experience.

We have seen that the moral consciousness calls out and exercises the entire nature of man; intelligence, heart, and will are all demanded and all constantly employed in the effort to decide the many forms taken by the general problem, What ought I to do? Were it our present task, we could show with equal clearness and certainty that the same powers of human nature are similarly employed in the attempt to answer the

several problems of religious belief and of the conduct of life in accordance with this belief. The point of view from which the conduct of life is regarded, and its rules and maxims determined, differs in the two cases; and so does the direction in which conduct is turned; and to a less extent, the goal at which it is directed. And yet neither series of problems can be settled in a practical way without involving the other; indeed, the two cannot be kept separated even in thought. When the ideal of the moral life is raised by an act of imagination beyond the limitations of time and sense, — if we may be allowed for the moment this figurative and somewhat extravagant way of expressing ourselves, — we find the sanctions, the confidences, and the inducements of the personal moral ideal merging themselves with that larger and all comprehending Ideal which philosophy endeavors to expose as the Ground of all Reality, and which religious faith personifies and worships as God.

The most important differences between morality and religion are two: the one has reference to the object, the other to the point of view. The object on which morality primarily directs our attention is our fellow men. The question of duty involves something to be done which is *due* from our Self to some other Self. We are virtuous or vicious as a man among men. The disposition, the intention, the act, is right or wrong, as an affair of social concernment. The

customs and laws of the society of which we are members — one among many — afford the first-hand sources from which the sanctions, the justification, the rewards, and the punishments of our individual acts are most obviously derived. Even when these customs and laws have to do with conventional religious observances, the nature of the object to be attained is not altered. If the gods are angry with any impious member of the tribe, the tribe is likely to suffer for it. If individuals or the minority hold opinions that lead them to the open practice of acts of irreligion which the majority regard as sure to prove prejudicial to the social welfare, such acts may be declared immoral and made punishable by law; — or if not by law, still by the yet more efficient punishment of social scorn and social ostracism. What is called the separation of Church and State has little or no real effect on the nature of this connection.

The object of religious faith and worship, however, is some invisible being or beings. Its affiliations, so to say, are with a society that is the construct of the imagination, with persons, or a Person, who must be *revealed* by some notable natural phenomenon or object; or by the mouth of some seer or priest, or prophet (a conjurer or medicine-man will do); or by some inward breathing, or voice, or other medium of inspiration. If the influences of philosophical reflection, the progressive unification of the positive sciences,

and religious revelation, have combined to effect such a form of Theism as commends itself to mind, heart, and will; then we may say that the conception of an alone God becomes the Ideal of all personal excellences. Thus the Divine Being, immanent in the Universe of things and of souls, becomes the object of filial trust and devotion, the One in whom the sanctions of right living are found, and to whom the attempt at right living is a rational devotion.

The other difference between morality and religion is also connected with the social idea and the sources of the social impulse. Primarily in its initial stages, and principally in all its stages, religion is an affair of the individual soul. Its first and constantly repeated question is not, How do you stand toward society? but, How do you stand toward God? And this is a question which concerns every one as though there were no other one in all the wide world. Of course we do not mean — as we shall make haste to explain more in detail — that religion has nothing to do with social betterment and social reform; on the contrary, we believe that it always has been and always must be, the greatest of all the forces that operate to lift up the social condition and to promote the social welfare of mankind. We believe also that a so-called religion which does not actually do this, whatever its creed, its ritual, or the wealth or rank or political influence of its constituency, must be placed very low down in

the scale of moral values. This is the supreme test of Christianity the world over, at the present time. Can it in fact redeem society? Better, from the moral point of view, the crude superstition of the savage whose gods are at any rate alive, than the formulated beliefs of a State Church that acknowledges in fact no control over the conduct of life from a Living God. But the social power of religion must dwell in individuals who have taken, as lone souls and each for himself, the filial attitude toward the invisible powers, or the One Power whom the Universe reveals, as Spirit dealing with human spirits, one by one, and one at a time, so to say.

The same essential relation of religion and morality, but without identification, which psychological analysis supports, is further distinctly and sufficiently confirmed by the facts of history. On this broad field we cannot enter. We cannot even step over its threshold in any way of examination to invite the confidence of others in our *ipse dixit*. We can only recite a few of the authorities with whom we have seen quite sufficient reason to range ourselves in a larger treatise on the same subject (Chaps. XXIV–XXVI, "Philosophy of Conduct," p. 552ff.): "What Pfleiderer calls the 'positivist view'—namely, 'that at first religion and morality had little or nothing to do with each other,' he declares to be contradicted by everything we know of the early history of mankind. Indeed, the same authority has previ-

ously asserted the truth of exactly the opposite proposition: 'The historical beginning of all morality is to be found in religion.' In a more qualified and cautious way we find Wundt affirming in his treatise of Ethics: 'History shows that almost all, and especially all the more significant forms of life, have their root in religious motives that have disappeared from the consciousness of a later age; and thus teaches that man's education in custom and morality begins with the development of religious worship.' And Waitz, who speaks from the standpoint of the most sane and accomplished student of anthropology, declares: 'There is hardly a more trustworthy sign and a safer criterion of the civilization of a people than the degree in which the demands of pure morality are supported by their religion and are interwoven with their religious life.' An admirable little book by Roskoff shows how, in the natural order of the development of human life, 'Custom and the Law receive divine sanction, the connection between religion and morality is placed in clear light, and the two appear in their reciprocal relation.'"

Of course, it is not meant that many customs which we of today rightly regard as atrociously immoral, such as prostitution, murder, robbery, and adultery, have not been sanctioned and even commanded in the name of religion; nor on the other hand, that the current conceptions of the gods have uniformly been such as to recommend

them as patterns of the higher morality. Even that conception, for which in its clearest and later development the world owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to the Hebrew prophets, the conception of Jehovah, as a God of Righteousness, was not in its earlier form, and has not yet in Christian theology been shaped so as to become, the faultlessly moral, personal Ideal. For the ideals of both morals and religion have been, and still are, and we hope ever will be, in a course of development. Nor do we mean that the twin sisters of morality and religion have always trod the path of progress with an even step and hand-in-hand. But always the two have been in most vital and influential connection. What men believe the gods are, and wish men to do and to be, cannot help powerfully influencing what men think that they themselves ought to do and be, and would better do and be, if they wish to stand well with the gods.

But the problem of the relations of morality and religion presents itself to us at the present time in a far more concrete and practical form. It is a question of courses of action, a question of life, of the relation of the moral life to the religious life. It is, the rather, the problem of the same life regarded from two somewhat different points of view, or in two somewhat different but closely related aspects. Our one leading question, to which we return again and again so often as we seem even for a brief time to wander, recurs in

this form: What ought I to do? In pursuit of an answer we have been led to the conclusion that every person is bound, by the essential conditions and unchanging nature of his personal existence, to set before him an ideal of personal development in social relations with other persons. This ideal has claims, has sanctions, and has a worth, quite unique in some respects and in some respects incomparable, though closely allied to the ideals of happiness and of beauty. What, now we ask, has religion to do with all this? Does it illumine, strengthen, and enforce the claims, serve to place the sanctions on a more solid ground of reality, and greaten and, as it were, sanctify the worth of the moral life? We believe that it does all this.

It is not difficult to see how one's mental and practically active attitude toward the World in which human beings are set for their struggle after an improved social life should affect in no small degree the nature of the struggle itself. This is true both for the individual and for society at large. Only if man were more sadly divided against himself than he happens, or — shall we not say? — is destined now to be, could the case be otherwise. Is the Universe friendly to man? — really friendly, in his struggle upward; especially to his effort, in however blind and halting fashion, to grasp after and progressively obtain an increased measure of moral good, and of all the other good things which moral goodness may reasonably be supposed to have in its train?

Does *It* sympathize with man, appreciate in any real and helpful way the meaning of his trials; and in any trustworthy way guarantee the success, and the reward for success, of his efforts? Is a World that is pledged, to the very core of its Being, in the interests of social righteousness, a better environment for the individual's efforts to be a righteous person, living and working for the triumph of social righteousness, than a World that, if we refuse to be satisfied with empty metaphors which cannot be translated into intelligible prose, has no capacity for anything of the kind? To put our query into the language of religion: Is a godless Universe more favorable to the aims and efforts of the moral life, than a Universe whose very being is the manifestation of immanent Personal Righteousness, the garment, as it were, of an indwelling, perfect Holy Spirit? Or, once more, — to bring back our question to its more practical form, while apologizing for any seeming vulgarity attaching to the precise manner of its asking: Can the moral life "go it alone" so reasonably and so securely as when it joins itself to, and walks hand in hand with, the life of religion?

There is indeed something wonderful about the way that the mind of man entertains, and his heart and will cling to, the ideals of morality for the individual and for society. It is an amazing wonder, when you come to think soberly about the matter, how sublimely strong, how power-

fully sublime, these ideals show themselves to be. All men in all ages have fallen far short of them; multitudes have seemed openly to disregard and deliberately to violate them; but in their secret hearts, they are few who do not bow with respect before them in some of their more imperfect, fragmentary, and even grotesquely misshapen forms. On the other hand, there have been, and there still are, millions of men and women who have unflinchingly or even cheerfully braved much suffering, hardship, loss, and death itself, rather than be false to their conception of what some duty bade them do, and their understanding of what some of the more cardinal of the virtues demanded they should bring themselves to be. And there have always been the "good few" who have placed the claims, the sanctions, the values, and the ends of the moral life at a height in the scale beyond all comparison. Those who have been wont to sneer at such *moral optimism*, as of the temper of the Pharisee, of the man who is offensive to his fellow, because he seems to be saying, "I am holier than thou," are themselves compelled to resort to some sort of hypocrisy in the effort to justify or to cover up their own breaches of the moral law. There is no other so unimpeachable witness for the "categorical" claims of the moral life as this immoral act of hypocrisy. What but respect for morality, either on his own part, or on the part of his fellow men, could induce any one to play the part of a hypo-

crite? Without its pretence, individuals and nations cannot fight and murder, cannot steal, cannot gratify hate and lust and greed.

One is plunged into hopeless difficulties when one attempts to give a satisfactory account to oneself of the origin and development of the moral ideal, whether for the individual or for society, out of a quite godless Universe. If the Universe were not its friend, how could this ideal gain foothold and attain its strong and sublime position in the minds, and hearts, and wills of mankind? Explanations for some of the facts of man's moral evolution through the long series of centuries, since he became a moral being in any true sense of the words, are patent enough. A doughty attempt may be made to evolve from these facts certain formulas which bear more or less resemblance to what the positive sciences of Nature are pleased to call their discovered "laws." But the cases are not very strictly parallel. For the facts, whose description in a time-series constitutes the history of the moral evolution of the races of man, themselves have their last source in the nature of the world; and a world that has in it no moral Nature is a very difficult world from which to evolve, as true cause of real effects, the nature of a moral spirit resembling that which moves in the minds and souls of men. By what authority can a Universe that thinks not, and serves no thought, tell me what I *ought to think* it right to do? What I *must do* under the

physical necessity of saving my life, of providing it with food, shelter, the gratification of sexual appetite, and the other goods that are the prizes of certain ways of behavior, the "constitution of things" — as we are wont to say — may teach me, if I live long enough to learn. What I *must do* to avoid extermination or extreme discomfort and suffering at the hands of my fellows, who are competing with me for an undue share of these same goods, might come to me as the result of sufficient experience in a world that takes no account of strictly moral values or of the worth of moral ideals. But morality cannot be born of physieal necessity alone; and the word "must," however frequently and sternly spoken by this kind of necessity, can never acquire the meaning of the ethical words, "I ought."

Surely, then, it sets the mind, in the exercise of its reasoning powers to secure the interests of a whole-hearted morality, at rest in no small degree, if it can explain its own experience in accordance with the principle of a Universe itself moral to the core. Thus the good man is made of one mind with the World of which he is a part. Thus, as moral and striving after moral perfection, a man is not simply one thing among an infinite number of other like or unlike things, not simply one animal of a species distinguished in certain respects above other animal species. As capable of morality he becomes a *person*, pledged by the gift of personality from a divine hand, to relations

of sympathy and loyal co-operation with the One Person whose off-spring he, and all the persons in the Universe, have a valid title to be called. Surely — we repeat — it unifies the thoughts, helps solve mental difficulties, and sets the mind at rest, if the good man can get and keep a conception of the Universe which commends itself from the most exalted point of view as assumed by the religious consciousness.

This, however, is not the most important service which religion renders to the man who is determined to be loyal to the ideals of the moral life. It is a great and most rational addition to the sanctions of the moral life if one may find secure ground for them in the Universe itself, in the one all-embracing Reality. Some of these sanctions seem, when considered purely from the individual or even from the historical point of view, rather shifty and, at best, only partial and temporary. Indeed, so far as they consist in the consent awarded to particular customs, or in the commands of particular legal enactments, or in the conclusions of professional moralists and casuists, they all partake more or less of this changeable character. We long to *ground* our moral ideals somewhere; we are fain to find their ultimate sanctions in the One whom philosophy calls the "World-Ground," and religious faith calls God. It is true that our assurance of finding the sanction for any particular deed or course of conduct by ascribing it to the Will of God is

liable to grievous error and to multitudinous mistakes. The "voice of God" has counselled men to not a few misdeeds and even horrid crimes.

But on the other hand, there is scarcely any other maxim more frequently pertaining to the conduct of the moral life, or more influential in its guidance, than the one which naïvely affirms the belief that, in general, "the voice of conscience" is the equivalent of the "voice of God." "There are few things at once more pathetic and more dignified in human history than the position on questions of right and wrong which have been taken, in loneliness, by the always few devoted 'followers of the Lord,' when the popular declarations were all the other way. On *God's* side stood the Hebrew prophets when his people were against him on the moral issues of the day. On *God's* side stood Socrates, satisfied that the sanctifying testimony of the 'daemon' within him was better to follow, even at the cost of life, than the judgments of the Athenian demos. On *God's* side stood Martin Luther and felt that it was enough; he could do no otherwise. But in less conspicuous and in historically unimportant ways, thousands of plain men and women are constantly trying to invoke the divine sanctions upon their conduct of the path of life."

Let it not be forgotten, however, that the point of our argument is not the untenable conclusion that the confidence of the appeal for divine sanctions to any particular deed or course of

conduct completely justifies its morality, much less secures its infallibility. Moral judgment, like all other human judgment, is always liable to fallibility. The hypocrisy which varnishes over selfishness in the name of religion is no better and no worse than the hypocrisy which does the same thing in the sacred name of morality. Sincere piety and sincere loyalty to moral principle are not always, alas! combined with the utmost wisdom in practical affairs. But the truth for which we contend is this: The support which piety gives to the desire to know and do the right thing, by way of the appeal which piety may honestly make to the divine authority, adds great strength and breadth to the sanctions of morality. The morally good is more clearly and forcibly made sacred, when it is considered as the ordinance of an unchanging Divine Spirit. The tribute paid by the chorus in Sophocles' "King Œdipus" to the power of religious feeling in its support of dictates of conscience is as rational from the philosophical point of view as it is poetically beautiful:

> "Oh may I live
> Sinless and pure in every word and deed,
> Ordained by those firm laws that hold their realm on high!
> Begotten of heaven, of brightest ether born,
> Created not of man's ephemeral mould."

And in fact, not only Christianity but all the greater religions, are on the whole the principal supporters of the sanctions of the moral life.

There are certain of the sweeter and more beautiful of the virtues, for which it is difficult to find any rational grounds of sanction outside of the religious view of the World and of man's relations to it as somehow the mysterious manifestation of a Spirit committed to the obligations and the issues of the perfect moral life. Of such virtues we mention the following four: patience, reverence, humility, and resignation. But in order to make this clear, it is necessary to distinguish carefully between the reality and the appearance of these morally right "dispositions" toward the world of things and of men. As most genuine and conspicuously worthy of *moral* approbation these dispositions are all dependent in no uncertain way upon the spirit of piety. For example: the virtue of patience is not sullen despair or the enforced but untrustful and unloving acceptance of evils which we cannot avoid, or from which, if they have once seized upon us, we cannot shake ourselves free. It is true that, not only the appearance but the reality of a virtuous patience, is largely a matter of temperament and of conditions of the nervous system. But the attitude which the soul has toward the unavoidable ills of life, when it is simply yielding to the inevitable in an openly quiet manner, because of the uselessness of struggle and debate with a Nature that cares not, and heeds not, what becomes of the individual, is a very different attitude from that filial spirit of endurance which

provides its justification in the faith that all is subject to a righteous and loving will. The man who sets his teeth and makes no sign, when a resistless and blind fate has seized him, may indeed display the qualities of a moral hero; but he cannot well exercise the gracious virtue of patience in the spirit of a sincere piety.

A certain feeling of awe, that is not wholly a blind animal terror, is the quite natural attitude of all men toward the more impressive exhibitions of the tremendous forces, and the more significant events, of Nature, — sea and land, mountain and valley, jungle of tropical forest and treeless steppe. Not only the bigness and might of the world of things, but its mystery, seduce the thoughtful contemplator of its ways of behavior into endless musing over the depths of its secrets and the infinite reaches and heights of its sublimity. The savages of the American forest and of the Islands of the South Seas agree with the Hebrew prophets in believing that the Divine Voice is in the thunder, in the wild shriek of the tempest, and in the sullen roar of the sea. All men from time immemorial have felt reverence, have paid worship, before the hidden forces that work in everything which lives and grows. Indeed, it is this worship of the mystery of life which has ministered to some of the most appalling forms of cruelty and lust.

The modern positive sciences have not diminished this irresistible call to the feeling of mystery

before natural forces and natural phenomena. On the contrary, all their discoveries have conspired to deepen this feeling and to render it more rational. The Universe can no longer be regarded as a huge but rather clumsy machine; it is at least, if only a mechanism, an infinitely intricate and wonderfully balanced and knowingly self-controlled (*sic*) piece of mechanism. We do not wonder that men have worshipped Nature, in parts or as a whole; however purely scientific, we cannot help ourselves taking a reverential attitude before *It*.

And, indeed, to be irreverent toward the Universe, from whatever point of view one elects to regard it, has never seemed to thoughtful men quite the right thing morally. To swear at the world of things, or shake our fists and utter our oaths in the face of earthquakes, floods, and storms at sea, does not appear the correct answer to the question, What ought I to do under great provocation? Such conduct seems not merely silly, but positively immoral. It almost appears as though we attributed to it a bit of that foolishness which an ancient writer says belongs to all those who "say in their heart, 'there is no God.'" But why this feeling akin to reverence, if it is not quite reverence, when the system of things is *mere* mechanism, without moral character and moral interests and moral reference? Is not the feeling itself a witness, however unrecognized and involuntary, to the conviction that

the Universe cannot be treated practically as *mere* mechanism? It positively must be regarded as having mental and moral significance. It has, indeed, profound mystery; it behaves in ways which, when copied by men, we have to regard as ethically monstrous; it plays us "tricks," if you please to call them such, that are very inconvenient and apparently unworthy of a claim to goodness. And yet the moral consciousness of the greater part of humanity has rather steadfastly maintained that it is not right to treat Nature with irreverence.

We are not writing a treatise on theology, or attempting some new and improved form of a Theodicy. But let us notice briefly the effect on this virtue of reverence, of taking the pious point of view. Let us introduce a confident faith in Providence into our own experiences with the forces and the phenomena of Nature. By the confidence of faith we do not understand the belief that the world's affairs are conducted with the very special purpose of serving what we as individuals are surest would be best for us, but what in no respect most surely would be best. Nor do we mean that natural phenomena are the manifestations of capricious will, drawn hither and thither by conflicting interests or competing petitions for its favors. Such selfish superstitions furnish no food for a pious attitude of reverence toward the Divine Being, the works of his hand, and the wisdom of his decrees. On

the other hand, it can scarcely be denied that the faith (if one can honestly attain it) of a piety which looks on all these happenings, however hidden their connections in fact, and however mysterious their outcome, as under the control of a wise and loving personal will, makes the virtue of reverence more reasonable and more gracious.

Somewhat the same things may be said of humility that have already been said of the virtue of patience. It is no wonder that the Stoics despised the Christian virtue of humility, so little did they understand its real nature. But while as a genuine virtue its foundations are in the spirit of piety, its exercise has not been confined to Christianity alone. Humility is a virtue which lies low (*humilis*) before God alone but stands erect before men. It was the virtue which mingled with courage when the ancient prophet defied his king: "As Jehovah of hosts liveth, before whom I stand." It was in the lion-hearted modern man, whose epitaph reads: "Fearing God, he feared naught else beside." It is one of the essential characteristics of the piety of the Japanese *Bushidō;* for the spirit of the brave knight must prompt him, while quite fearless, to bow low before his liege lord. In order not to think of oneself more highly, or less highly, than one "ought to think," it is a help to think of oneself as always "in the sight of God."

As a result of the moral career amidst the dis-

appointments, losses, and inevitable failures, as well as the mistakes, which accompany the path of life, the sweetest fruit of maturity is the virtue of a pious resignation. But least of all the virtues is this to be confounded with any of its counterfeits. It is neither the *Shikata ga nai* ("it cannot be helped") of the careless Japanese servant, or the "game is up" of the unlucky gambler. It is the calm confidence with which the pious good man can review his career and say: "I have lived, and loved, and labored. All is well."

Religion also supports and strengthens the moral life by heightening and securing its values. Morality may indeed claim a worth of its very own. So it presents itself to the most enlightened moral consciousness of mankind. If there were no future life, if there were no God, still we seem bound — however irrationally and hopelessly — to cling to our faith in the supreme worth of the moral ideals. But the riddle of *Why* (?) we should esteem this ideal of morality to be of such priceless value in a godless Universe seems hopelessly dark. The practical confidence that it is indeed so, in a Universe that itself has no standards of value to which we can appeal in any ultimate way, makes a heavy drain on one's credulity and on the tightness of one's grip upon the maxims of a righteous life.

In one of the many and not always consistent utterances of the late Professor Huxley respecting

the relations of Nature to the moral life of man, he makes such declarations as the following: All the efforts of science "have utterly failed to bring the order of things into harmony with the moral sense of man"; the "injustice of the nature of things" is quite "unfathomable"; "the cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends." It would seem to need no argument to show that such a view as this tends to lessen the estimate of the worth of man's moral sense, and of the value of those moral ends, which are so contradicted by everything which the positive sciences have discovered concerning the nature and working of the "cosmic process." But the faith of religion points in directions quite the opposite of these. In its naïve form it holds with the utterance of the Sanscrit drama, in which the parasite of a wicked prince, when his master is trying to persuade him to commit murder, because there would be no one near to witness the act, replies:

> "All nature would behold the crime,
> The genii of the grove, the sun, the moon,
> The winds, the vaults of heaven, the firm-set earth."

By reflective thinking, moral philosophy arrives at the conclusion of Fichte: "The world-order is in the last analysis a moral order." This brings science and philosophy into face-to-face and irreconcilable conflict, but with religion on philosophy's side. For what the latter does in a practical way for every believer in a Spirit of righteousness as immanent in the cosmic processes

is no less than this: *Religion infinitely increases the moral values by lifting them into the realm of the eternal.* This enormous rise in the intrinsic worth of the moral life, the attitude of piety toward the Universe secures, for both the individual and the race.

If death ends all for all, and the end of all things is to be looked for in an enormous burned-out coal or expanse of dissipated gas, it is foolish to contend that the values of moral acquisitions and final purposes are in no way affected thereby. But the philosophical and theological demonstrations of the innate and essential indestructibility of the individual person (the so-called "*proofs*" for the immortality of the soul) have ceased to convince the minds who know the physical and psycho-physical facts, as they once did. The modern appeal to senuous, psychic manifestations of departed spirits, which in itself is as old as the history of human superstitions, has not as yet given itself enough of scientific form, or disclosed enough of evidence, to restore the confidence that has been voided by the lapsing of these proofs. The cosmic processes still seem very dubious in their witness as to what the individual may expect, who does not base his hopes for the life beyond upon religious faith. How, then, shall the individual assure himself that the issues of his life from the moral point of view are of enough lasting worth to warrant all the struggle and self-denial which must be spent upon them?

Now we are far enough from advocating the doctrine that some kind of pay of future happiness to be gained, or of future misery to be avoided, must be conceived of as a reward for the knight who is faithful up to death in the battles ceaselessly being fought over moral issues. Nor do we think that the "icy guerdon" of an all-powerful and relentless Judge must be appealed to in order to make the moral life well worth the living for the sincerely good man. All our examination hitherto has fostered the conclusion that *just the being a good man is in itself well worth the while.* But surely to continue on into eternity this growth in goodness increases the values, and greatens the importance of the issues, of the moral life for the individual. But what is even more important to notice is this. The essential worth of the moral life of the individual is measured by its social influences. Just to increase — by ever so little — the happiness and welfare, but above all the moral welfare, of others that are living with us and that will live on after us, may reasonably be held to make the life of the good man better worth the while. But suppose "the while" of this beneficent influence stretches itself away into the region of the eternal; is not the worth still more enhanced?

We have already criticised some of the current views and practices of so-called social service; and of the prevailing appetite for reforms in the lump. With all its nobleness of aim and en-

couraging results, the "movement" is far more ineffective than it should be; and this is largely through its failure to bring the ideas and motives of the religious life to bear upon the individual man. For it is religion which has chiefly supplied the individual with ideas and motives for effective social service in the past; and unless we have greatly misinterpreted the facts of human nature, we shall have to look in future chiefly to the same source for our supply. Unless I can see that *my* duty, *my* virtuous living, *my* adherence to the ideal of the moral life, involve endless issues of good or evil for myself and others, I cannot enjoy all that is possible for enforcing the rational sanctions and lifting up the values, of such a life. "God is the Father of mankind" said Epictetus; and "from the doctrine of our relationship to God we are to deduce its consequences," — consequences, that is, in the rules and practice of right living. "Seek the most perfect way" we read in the *Maxims of Ptah-hotep* ("the oldest book in the world") "that thy conduct may be above reproach. Justice is great, invariable, and assured; it has not been disturbed since the age of Osiris. . . . Let thy love pass into the heart of those that love thee: cause those about thee to be loving and obedient . . . thou art become the steward of the good things of God."

But it is in respect of the Ideal of the moral life that religion exercises its supreme influence. For the pious individual his ideal is to become

the "son of God," perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect. For the social conception of an economically prosperous community, religion substitutes the conception of a perfected Kingdom of God. Like all other of the more vague and comprehensive of human ideals, this one has taken many shapes; without doubt it has not yet reached its final and unimpeachable form. But rightly understood, even from our present restricted and essentially earthly point of view, it is the grandest of all ethical conceptions. For the individual and for the race, to go forward toward this incomparable goal of endeavor is to pursue the Way of Salvation. Precisely what that way is at every step, we are no more able to define for every man and for all time than we are able to define the exact path by which every individual must walk toward the moral ideal. By general consent of the most *enlightened* (not the modern heretics alone, but the orthodox of all time) it is not a formulated creed, or "flowery talk" from those "enamored of Vedic words." By common consent, too, it is not a matter of external appearances, a kind of will-worship only. By common consent, too, even the Church-father Augustine is convicted of deadly error when he says: "A man can have everything outside the Church, only not salvation; and though he thinks he is living a good life, yet for the one crime of schism from the Church he will not have part in life, but the wrath of God abides

on the schismatic." For the Kingdom of God is more than all the churches. By common consent, the way of salvation is a life; but the life of religion demands intellect, heart, and will, united in loyalty of active and fruitful devotion to the Ideal of religion; and the Ideal of religion is the Kingdom of God, and for each individual a place and a work in that Kingdom.

Thus in the faraway future do morality and religion seem to come together in their conception of the supreme ideal of both. But "only as the spirit of unity, and as an essential agreement concerning the content of religious faith and concerning the way of salvation, are secured and perfected, is any tendency toward an all-embracing social organization desirable or at all likely to be affected. As contributing to such a social communion, all devout souls must welcome (1) an increased understanding of each others' positions; (2) a continued improvement of those conceptions, sentiments, and forms of life, which are characteristic of what is best in all the purest and most rational religions; (3) a growing willingness to abandon the false for the true, the ethically inferior for the ethically superior, wherever truth and moral excellence are to be found; and, finally, (4) the general progress of intellectual enlightenment and social betterment."

The living and indissoluble relation between these two sources of human aspiration and endeavor, as they run side by side in history, has

been correctly though imperfectly expressed by a modern writer on "The Origin and Growth of the Conception of God" in the following words: "Thus Religion and Morals react one upon another, the idea of duty purifying the conception of deity; and the latter, in its turn, fortifying the feeling of obligation, while fructifying it with love." (D'Alviella, p. 177.) Both morals and religion are in a process of evolution, the goal of which is the social Ideal which religion calls the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God. At the nearer end of this process we are invited to imagine a Plato's Republic, or to conceive of some happy and prosperous Israel under the rule of Yahweh. At the other end stands the Apocalypse of "a new heaven and a new earth" and "a great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God." Then "the nations of them that are saved shall walk in the light of it"; "and there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and the lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him; and they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads."

But to translate this poetry into prose who should aspire or even care? Enough for the individual that he should give practical heed to the exhortation of the wise Plato: "Wherefore my counsel is, that we hold fast to the heavenly way and follow after justice and virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal and able to

endure every sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live dear to one another and to the gods, both while remaining here and when, like conquerors in the games . . . we receive our reward." Or better still, to conduct the moral life under the rule of the great teacher and example: "No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to one and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." "But seek ye first his kingdom and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

But, *What ought I to do* about all this? For the man who already has the faiths and hopes and, at least in some genuinely influential degree, the motives, for the religious life, the answer to this personal and eminently practical problem is plain enough. It amounts to economizing and harmonizing the energies of mind, heart, and will. Religion and morality join their sanctions, combine their values, unite their forces, in the pursuit of the Ideal in which, at the lowest point and at the highest point that fix the line for the conduct of life, they both coincide. But how about the man who has not these faiths and hopes, and who cannot honestly submit his will to the motives that give energy and efficiency to the truly religious life? What ought *he* to do? Certainly not play the hypocrite or sacrifice his reason before conventional or antiquated superstitions. To do this would be to forfeit the sanctions, and

destroy the values, of both morality and religion. The path of unreason and insincerity can never conduct to, or toward, either of the two ideals, however conceived, if in fidelity to fact and to a measure of right thinking. But neither does duty permit of indifference or carelessness, toward the objective facts, the rational truths, the inward experiences, of the religious life. Positive irreligion has always — and never without justice — been considered to savor of immorality. The undevout attitude toward the Universe, the attitude of hate, or scorn, or cold neglect, toward the religious experiences of the race, the failure in tenderness and sympathy toward those of our brethren who are sincerely devout, — these dispositions, and the conduct which grows out of them, are quite the opposite of the cardinal virtues which morality commends and commands.

Thus far, then, the answer to our main and constantly recurring inquiry, What ought I to do? is the same for every man. To reflect, to weigh evidence, to purify the mind and heart, to let in the light through glass washed clean, and to submit the whole man to the dominance of what is highest and best, — no less than this is the practical answer to our question when the call to enrich and support the moral life by the religious life is sounding in our ears. And it is our firm conviction that he who does his duty courageously and loyally in this way will not suffer for

long from a divided manhood in the interests of the right conduct of his life.

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water,
That bringeth forth its fruit in its season,
Whose leaf also doth not wither;
And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

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